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THE JCS SYSTEM BEFORE AND AFTER GOLDWATER-NICHOLS

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ABSTRACT

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The success of military actions undertaken by the U.S. after World War II has been questioned. The organization of the military's national level decision-making apparatus was cited as a major reason for the less-than-spectacular performance in Vietnam, Iran, etc. The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), a committee where each member has had equal influence and authority, resolved issues by establishing a consensus of opinions, and made decisions that were acceptable to all members and their respective services, but not necessarily in the best interests of the national defense overall. The events that led to, and the passage of, the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 have caused a change in the way the military does its business. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the commanders of the combatant commands now have more of the authority and responsibility they need to properly guide the military without having to satisfy all of the services. However, it is not the Act alone that has caused this change. It has legitimized the influence, but a large part of the change is also due to the personalities and capabilities of the key players.



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I. INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to examine the effects of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 on the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) system and its attendant methods of doing business in the military.

THESIS

On the uniformed side of the Department of Defense (DOD), the Goldwater-Nichols Act has caused a departure from a consensus-building framework (i.e., power, influence, and authority distributed among the services and brought together by the JCS system) for joint planning and operations, to one where unity of purpose and singular responsibility (i.e., in the person of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) is now emphasized and practiced. The Act has resulted, at least partially, in a "power gain" by the Chairman, the Joint Staff, and the Commanders-in-Chief of the combatant commands, and an accompanying "power drain" from the service chiefs. This has subsequently resulted in a more efficient and effective system for conducting strategic and operational planning, providing sound military advice to the National Command Authority, developing national military strategy from which flows the requisite force structure, and supervising both the peacetime and wartime operation of this country's fighting organizations. However, even with the changes in the structure and

proceedings of the organizations involved, one of the major factors, if not the major factor, in the proper or improper functioning of the JCS and its place in the national security establishment depends on the personalities and capabilities of the players involved.

SCOPE

To investigate the totality of the Goldwater-Nichols Act is beyond the scope of this undertaking; therefore, as mentioned above, the Act's effect on national level military decision-making will receive the primary attention, concentrating on the JCS system, to include the processes in place and the interactions of the key officials. There will be excursions into some of the secretariat aspects of the DOD operation, with tangential issues such as resource management being addressed.

INTERVIEWS

In addition to using the written material available, it was my intention to interview as many as possible of the key senior people who participated in top-level military decision-making before Goldwater-Nichols, after its passage, or both. As with most things in life, timing is everything, and in this case, mine was not the best. Desert Shield, followed by Desert Storm, necessarily preempted my efforts to see many of these officials. However, I was able to see several of the involved active and retired officers and civilians who had many insightful thoughts to give me. To them I

owe a great deal of thanks for taking the time out of their busy schedules to see me.

STRATEGY MODEL

In defining strategy, I used the model described by Colonel Arthur F. Lykke, Jr. (USA Retired) in his Military Strategy: Theory and Application, where "[S]trategy equals **Ends** (objectives towards which one strives) plus **Ways** (courses of action) plus **Means** (instruments by which some end can be achieved)."¹ He explains that there are two levels of strategy. The first is operational strategy which forms the basis for short-range plans of action. The second is that long-range strategy used to drive the development of force structure based on "estimates of future threats, objectives and requirements."² As Jeffrey Record stated it in Beyond Military Reform, strategy is the tool by which we "...maintain a proper relationship between the military means available to the state and the political objectives on behalf of which those means are employed"³; strategy is "...making choices within the framework of finite resources and an ability to distinguish between the desirable and the possible...."⁴ The last point about strategy is that force structure development should be linked to, and flow from the stated strategy, and that strategy must somehow take into consideration the resources that will be available.

II. Pre-Goldwater-Nichols

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prior to World War II, senior military officials had little influence on the grand design of military activities. During this time, the military departments (War and Navy) held executive or cabinet positions, and the service secretaries exercised significant influence over their service, as well as in the community of U.S. national governmental departments. With the entry of the United States into World War II, President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill established a combined organization of senior American and British military officers to provide the strategic direction of the allied war effort. To respond to this, and because he questioned the effectiveness of service secretaries "fighting" the war, Roosevelt established the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff to act as the U.S. representatives to this combined military council. Initially, the Joint Chiefs, an informal arrangement with no legal power, consisted of the senior officers from the Army, the Army Air Forces, and the Navy. Later, the Chief of Staff to the Commander-in-Chief was added to provide a direct link between the service officers and the President. This, in effect, changed the command structure that previously ran from the President through the service secretaries to the field commanders to one where the President's orders were passed to the field commanders through the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). Service secretaries were left to deal primarily with the maintenance and mobilization aspects of their

services. FDR wanted to be the only appreciable influence on the JCS, and was determined to relegate Congress, as with the service secretaries, to concentrating on "resource mobilization, not strategy, command and operations".⁵ As the war progressed, FDR remained in control of U.S. operations, but because of health problems and other limiting factors, he was involved in only major issue decisions, and left the prosecution of the war, generally, to the JCS. Success in the war depended less on the structure of the organization than on the capabilities and skills of the commanders and forces, and the urgency of the situation. The aspect of, and requirement for, "jointness" grew from this experience.

It became obvious from the World War II experience that a formal arrangement had to be established to provide for proper joint planning, management, and operations. The separate service interests had to be integrated into a unified effort if the military was to fulfill its responsibilities as a major element of national power. However, the services had, for so long, enjoyed autonomy and control, and, thus, were reluctant to give up any of that influence.

The National Security Act of 1947 was the first in a series of legislative actions that set out to "unify" the efforts of the military departments. The Secretary of Defense was to be the principal assistant to the President on all military matters, with the services subordinate to him. The Joint Chiefs of Staff system, with an attendant Joint Staff, was to be the military link to the Secretary of Defense. The Joint Chiefs were to be the principal

military advisors to the President and the Secretary of Defense, and were to provide the strategic direction for the armed forces, prepare strategic plans, and establish unified and specified commands in strategic areas. Air forces were separated from the Army, and the Department of the Air Force was established equivalent to the Departments of the Army and Navy. The chain of command ran from the President through the Secretary of Defense through the service secretaries to the field commanders.

In an amendment to the 1947 Act that took effect in 1949, the Department of Defense was established as an executive department, the separate military departments lost their cabinet rank, becoming subordinate to DOD, and the position of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) was created. The CJCS was to be a member (non-voting initially) of the JCS who was to preside over the JCS, but with no command authority.

Several legislative changes were made through 1979, the major results being: the addition of the position of a Director of the Joint Staff; strengthening of the position of the Secretary of Defense; removal of the service secretaries from the operational chain of command; granting voting rights to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; increasing the CJCS's authority to manage the Joint Staff (although it was still under the control of the Joint Chiefs as a body); excluding the Joint Staff from acting as a general staff; and full inclusion of the Commandant of the Marine Corps into the JCS.

So just prior to the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols DOD

Reorganization Act in 1986, the military chain of command ran from the President through the Secretary of Defense to the unified and specified commanders in the field. The Secretary of Defense supervised the entire DOD operation with the help of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and the military departments, and the advice of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The JCS and the Joint Staff concentrated primarily on strategic and operational aspects, while OSD and the services' military and secretariat staffs addressed the organization, preparation, and maintenance of the service forces. Although strategic and operational responsibilities resided primarily in the JCS, the services managed to maintain a substantial influence in this arena. The Commander-in-Chief (CINC) of each of the unified and specified combatant commands held the responsibility to plan for, and execute, successful military operations in his area, if required.

NATIONAL MILITARY STRATEGY FORMULATION

For the forty years prior to the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act, the umbrella strategy for guiding most of the United States' political and military actions was the containment of Soviet expansion. This strategy was not the result of any formal joint military process, but grew from this country's senior leaders' determination of global necessities following World War II. Because it was, by far, the overriding consideration in all political, diplomatic, economic and military efforts, not a great deal of attention was paid to developing and analyzing alternative

strategies, even by the military community. As the years passed, there were modifications to the methods for stopping the spread of Communism. Initially, massive retaliation was to be the answer for any incursion by the U.S.S.R., followed by the design of flexible response. Regardless of the change in methods, the fact remained that the U.S.S.R. was our main, and only truly feared, enemy. Even our responses to the various "police actions" during that period (e.g., Korea) were tempered by the thought that the Communists might be planning a push into Western Europe, for example, while the current crisis was only a diversion. With this in the minds of the political and military leaders, modifications to the "strategy" of the time were made only to meet changes in technology, economics, and the like.

During the Cold War, political appointees became more and more involved in what were previously known as military matters. This "civilian activism"⁶ pushed the JCS and the military departments "to the periphery of operational decision-making in Washington."⁷ Inheriting an unsatisfactory arrangement, Secretary of Defense Robert MacNamara introduced his legions of systems analysts who were prone to quantify all aspects of military decision-making, raising management techniques above leadership and military training. In order to compete with the systems analysts, military officers felt it necessary to improve their analytical skills to the detriment of their military instincts and experience.

The development of long-range military strategy in support of stated national security goals and objectives was not a high

priority in the Department of Defense, as a whole, during the Cold War. In addition to the situations described in the previous paragraph, several other reasons for this come to mind. First, there was no requirement for the president to publish, on a regular basis, a formal document that clearly stated the national security strategy goals and objectives, thus no concise and concrete guidance from above DOD. Although the annual statement from the Secretary of Defense included guidance approved by the president, it was not a truly "top-down" set of directives. As stated in the Packard Commission report, "Today [1986], there is no rational system whereby the Executive Branch and the Congress reach coherent and enduring agreement on national military strategy, the forces to carry it out, and the funding that should be provided."⁸ Because the United States is an open and pluralistic society, this is a tall order under any circumstance. Political, diplomatic, and military issues place great restriction on what we can or cannot say publicly about our security intentions. Thus, there was, and still is a reluctance to say too much.

Different presidents developed their "strategy" for the country in various ways. Some made their decisions based on the advice of a few trusted advisors, while others involved greater numbers of people and organizations in the process. Presentation media for these strategy statements included National Security Decision Memoranda, presidential directives, memos, speeches, and the like. The military and civilian members of DOD would glean from these the intent of the President, and plan accordingly.

Second, with the introduction of systems analysts in the 1960s, resource apportionment and accountability became the prime focus. Defense Department officials knew, generally, what was expected of them, i.e., Communist containment and the protection of Western Europe and Japan. But the important discussions and decisions concentrated on who got what and how much. The services competed for what they could get, and developed their force structure based on what they were eventually allocated. Thus we have a situation where strategy did not drive force structure, but the other way around. This lies at the root of the current triad-based strategy and the services' competition for nuclear weaponry.

Third, the services enjoyed a significant degree of autonomy, while the JCS system, although responsible for joint direction and planning, had no real power to influence the services to any appreciable degree. Some services developed their own strategies, such as the maritime and air power strategies. They used these strategies to justify their force structure. At the DOD level then, there was no real grand strategy for the preparation, deployment, and employment of our forces based on current and anticipated world situations.

What eventually evolved was a military planning and execution system that included the following elements: the Joint Strategic Planning System (JSPS), the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System (PPBS), and the Joint Operation Planning System (JOPS). Although these systems continue to evolve, their purposes today are similar to what they were when the systems were conceived. The

JSPS serves as the system by which the CJCS fulfills his responsibility to provide "strategic plans and direction to the Armed Forces and to interact with the PPBS."⁹ Prior to Goldwater-Nichols, JSPS supported the Joint Chiefs as a body instead of one person, the CJCS. The PPBS produces a plan, program, and budget for DOD elements "...with the ultimate objective of furnishing the warfighting commander in chief with the best mixture of forces, equipment, and support attainable within fiscal constraints."¹⁰ JOPS is used to conduct joint planning. Of main concern in this discussion is the JSPS.

THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, JOINT STAFF, AND COMBATANT COMMANDS

Following World War II until just prior to the passage of Goldwater-Nichols, the Joint Chiefs of Staff system evolved with some policies and practices remaining fairly constant. All of the service chiefs and the CJCS were equals as members of the JCS. Serving also as the representatives of their services, the service chiefs had to take into account the interests of both their services and the defense institution as a whole. The chairman was the only member of the JCS who had no official tie to any of the services.

Any issue raised by a service chief had to be addressed by the JCS, regardless of the overall importance of the issue. When an issue was brought to the "tank", where the joint chiefs met, a vote was taken for or against the issue. It was a formal and open system, open in the sense that all of the services had to be

involved in the issues that reached the "tank". The end result was the approval of issues that were agreeable to all of the services and the chairman (beginning in 1958 when the chairman was given the right to vote in JCS sessions).

The Joint Staff supported the JCS, and thus worked for all of the chiefs and, consequently, for all of the services. Its mission was not to develop and advance military positions of its own, but to take what issues it was given by the services and work them to the point where they became acceptable to all members of the JCS. If this was not possible, the issue would die. The process to complete staff actions was fairly involved. They were run through a series of hurdles or coordination phases. An action passed from "flimsy" to "buff" to "green" to "red stripe" before it was considered complete. Thus the process was complex, time-consuming and did not always produce clear, concise and realistic products.

The quality of officers serving on the Joint Staff was sometimes questioned. Services were reluctant to send their best and brightest officers because they believed that those promising officers had to be groomed with the maximum amount of service experience. Army and Marine officers had to command field units, Naval officers had to command at sea, and Air Force officers had to fly. It was not a selfish reaction on the part of the services; it was just a fact of life that service officers required the experience they attained during their service assignments. And with all of that to be accomplished, there was little time left in an officer's career to spend much time on the Joint Staff or on the

staff of a unified or specified command. In some circles, an assignment to a joint staff was considered a "kiss of death" or a detriment to one's career progression.

And finally, the commanders-in-chief of the combatant commands, who were responsible for the execution of war plans in their respective areas, operated in a situation where their influence over the actions in Washington was minimal, and their command relationship to the forces that were marked for their use in war was unclear and diluted at best.

III. CRITICISMS AND ISSUES

To present and analyze the criticisms leveled against the military establishment, the format will consist of discussing three groups or organizations: the operation and dynamics of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as a body of individual service chiefs, the operation and composition of the Joint Staff, and the involvement and influence of the commanders of the combatant commands.

Those who have criticized the manner in which the Department of Defense has operated have been around for some time. The debates that eventually brought about the Goldwater-Nichols Act were just part of a long series, and the debates continue today even after Goldwater-Nichols. Additionally, many different groups have been involved in these debates. The list includes the Congress, the White House, private sector industry, special interest groups, the American public, and even the military itself. The list of criticisms associated with the military and the way it does business is long and varied, and this is a presentation of those considered to be the most significant.

In the years following World War II, the military began a decline in its ability to prosecute its duties effectively. The causes for this were numerous, with many coming from outside the military establishment itself. The Vietnam experience, in particular, began to focus significant attention on the military and its ability to perform. Although in the Steadman Report the command structure during Vietnam was seen as adequate ("... the

nature of the command system had [no] appreciable negative effect on the conduct of the war"¹¹), it was also described as "jury-rigged"¹² and having worked primarily because of the efforts of many highly dedicated and capable people.

Leading to Goldwater-Nichols, the primary concerns were:

- inadequate military advice to the National Command Authority which had resulted in it not being used to any useful extent,
- the ineffective role of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the JCS system in general,
- unclear responsibilities and the lack of authority of the commanders of the unified and specified combatant commanders, and
- inefficient and ineffective administrative practices.¹³

In the staff report to the Senate Armed Services Committee entitled Defense Organization: The Need for Change, four key "indicators of organizational deficiencies"¹⁴ for the period preceding Goldwater-Nichols were presented:

"o operational failures and deficiencies - poor inter-Service coordination during the Vietnam conflict, the Iranian hostage rescue mission, and even in the intervention in Grenada suggest deficiencies in the planning and preparation for employment of U.S. military forces in times of crisis;

o acquisition process deficiencies - cost overruns, stretched-out development and delivery schedules, and unsatisfactory weapons performance have been frequent criticisms of the acquisition process;

o lack of strategic direction - the strategies and long-range policies of the Department of Defense do not appear to be well formulated and are apparently only loosely connected to subsequent resource allocations; and

o poor inter-Service coordination - the programs of the individual military services do not appear to be well integrated around a common purpose that clearly ties means to goals."¹⁵

The JCS system is the key player in the first, third, and fourth

items above. Although the JCS system is not responsible for the acquisition process, the fact that it could not influence that process to any appreciable degree has been part of the problem.

THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF AND THE JCS SYSTEM IN GENERAL

Prior to the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act, the Joint Chiefs of Staff as a body represented the joint military establishment. According to McKittrick, the JCS had three responsibilities: to provide "timely and high quality military advice to the President, Secretary of Defense, etc.; to conduct joint planning (which includes strategic, operational, and logistics planning); and to conduct joint operations."¹⁶

Over the years, several criticisms developed about the performance of the service chiefs in their role as the Joint Chiefs of Staff. With the services remaining fairly autonomous in the overall DOD operation, service interests dominated even in the joint arena. As Korb states in The Joint Chiefs of Staff, The First Twenty-Five Years, "...in the joint arena, the chiefs have been influenced too much by service particularism or aggrandizement."¹⁷ There was no way for the service chief to completely divest himself from the requirements and interests of his service. He still relied on his service for his power base, and felt compelled to respond to its needs.¹⁸ Additionally, this autonomy was in some cases supported by members of Congress who felt it easier to influence separate services rather than having to tackle an organization with its power consolidated in one office.

Because of the retention of power by the services, true "joint" consideration of issues sometimes succumbed to the pressures of service influence.

This service influence, however, was not all bad. The reason that all of the services were, and still are, represented on the JCS is so that consideration of the services' contributions to the overall accomplishment of the military mission is taken into account. One could hardly expect a body of officials with little or no service experience (and the accompanying interest and loyalty) and control to make the best decisions on the composition of the forces needed, the training of those forces, the equipment needed in the future, the most beneficial distribution of military assets, and the conduct of military operations. The problem arises when service interests override joint matters which truly deserve priority. As General Vessey described it "... service parochialism ... [is the attempt] ... to advance the interests of one's own service at the expense of the effectiveness of the joint team..."¹⁹ Although there was probably never an intentional attempt to subvert the effectiveness of the joint team, situations did arise where service interests dominated an issue when the joint perspective should have prevailed. The reason was simple: no one person in charge. According to the Packard Commission, the President and the Secretary of Defense needed better integration of the individual views of the CINCs and the service chiefs, and that "[t]oday there is no one uniformed officer clearly responsible for providing such an integrated view ..." ²⁰

With the individual services retaining the majority of the power, and the service chiefs and the chairman sharing equal status, there was a lack of firm direction by any single person or organization within the JCS system. The JCS body (and as we will see later, the Joint Staff) acted as a committee, were prone to compromise in their deliberations, and produced what many critics have called watered-down, lowest-common-denominator decisions. Issues had to be settled with the approval of all of the services, and in this desire or requirement for unanimity resulted positions which were minimally acceptable to all services. This then led to further criticisms that the advice given by the Joint Chiefs was useless and unrealistic, and how it was, in large part, not even taken into consideration by the Secretary of Defense and the rest of the national decision-making apparatus. As Korb states, policies such as "containment, massive retaliation, flexible response, Vietnamization, and detente [were developed] with negligible input from the JCS."²¹ In The Call for JCS Reform: Crucial Issues, Moses describes the JCS as a forum "...reflecting four divergent views rather than a single, combined judgement or a menu of combined judgements..."²² He goes on to state that the "...committee-like nature of the JCS system does not produce the best advice..."²³ However, in fairness to the Joint Chiefs, there were situations beyond their control that precluded use of their advice, even if it was good advice. A clear example would be the Bay of Pigs debacle. President Kennedy's method for making major decisions was based on his preference to deal with a small select

group of close advisors. In this case, the military was given an insufficient voice in the proceedings that led to the actions in Cuba.

To make matters worse, the Joint Chiefs and the Joint Staff dealt with many, many issues (one figure quoted is 15,000 items a year²⁴), some as insignificant as uniform design. They agreed on most issues, but most issues were routine; the "...splits came on the crucial matters of budget ceilings, force levels, and strategy."²⁵

Coupled with the criticism of service autonomy and parochialism was the question of whether the service chiefs had enough time and the staffing wherewithal to adequately perform the functions of both the joint council member and the chief of service. According to the 1988 version of Title 10 of the U.S. Code, the services are responsible for:

- recruiting
- organizing
- supplying
- equipping (to include research & development (R&D))
- training
- servicing
- mobilizing/demobilizing
- administering (to include morale & welfare)
- maintaining
- construction, outfitting, and repair of military equipment
- construction, maintenance, and repair of buildings, structures, etc. and acquisition of real property.

Although some of these responsibilities belong to the service secretary, the service chief must remain informed and involved in all of the areas whether he has the primary responsibility or not.

From this, one could reach the conclusion that the work load is just too much for the service chief, and that the solution would

be to let him handle these issues while placing another military officer on the joint council. However, once again, it would be unwise to separate the person who has the service knowledge, experience, and control from the arena where decisions affecting all of the services are made. Adding another layer or conduit through which information, both up and down, must flow would make an already complex and slow-moving system worse. Although several very senior military people have argued for a split in these responsibilities (e.g., General Meyer, former Army Chief of Staff), the interview responses were unanimous that the service chief, in fact, must and can do both jobs satisfactorily. When one considers the requirement for information and control when making senior decisions, it makes sense to keep the service chiefs in the joint decision-making arena.

Another criticism leveled at the JCS system was that its staffing and decision-making process was an onerous one, and that time was wasted and trivial issues addressed. As Korb presents in his book, the Joint Chiefs have become "bogged down in the cumbersome process, ... addicted to the status quo, ... not a source of innovation in the national security policy-making process."²⁶ Most important agenda items originated from outside of the JCS system (e.g., the White House, the Secretary of Defense, the CINCs) with only a small number coming from within.²⁷ Thus the Joint Chiefs remained reactive rather than proactive.

Some of the issues addressed did not require the attention of the JCS or the Joint Staff, or at least did not deserve the level

of attention they got. The staffing of issues will be discussed in the next section. Although not often the case with the Joint Chiefs, since they were all equals, one of the service chiefs could raise an issue that really had no place in the "tank"; but because of his status, it had to be addressed by the body. When the position of Chairman was created in the 1949 amendment to the National Security Act of 1947, one of his tasks was to provide the agenda for JCS meetings, and to "assist the JCS to prosecute their business as promptly as practicable." This did not, however, grant him authority to dismiss topics deemed appropriate by the service chiefs. Although wise to consider all pertinent issues, the appropriateness of some issues being handled by the JCS was suspect. In this case, one service had the ability to push a certain issue to an unreasonable point, or at least cause the JCS to take time on an issue that rightfully belonged at a lower joint level or even should have remained in the service domain.

The last criticism to be discussed here is the JCS as a body and a system being overshadowed by programmers and budgeteers. As stated above, with the introduction of systems analysts in the 60s by Robert MaNamara to improve the efficiency of the Department of Defense, the military had to improve their quantitative skills to compete with these systems analysts. The dollar became the overriding factor in decisions, and policies were established by program and budget needs rather than by strategy. The services found themselves exerting most of their effort on getting as many dollars as possible into their respective budgets. Then strategy,

doctrine, force structure, equipment needed, etc. was established based on how much money the service could expect to receive. Partly because it was not staffed to, the JCS system had little or no influence on resource allocation. "[T]he Secretary [of Defense] lacks joint military advice on resource allocation issues regarding readiness, except to the extent that it is provided informally by the CJCS."²⁸ "There are ... no constrained joint recommendations on the Service POMs [Program Objective Memoranda]."²⁹ And as we will see later, the CINCs were at the mercy of the services through their component commanders.

THE JOINT STAFF

Several criticisms arose about the utility and quality of Joint Staff products. The first centers around the fact that, prior to Goldwater-Nichols, the Joint Staff worked for all of the service chiefs, who, for all intents and purposes, had a similar amount of influence on the Joint Staff (through their own staffs) as the Chairman. With the services still in the driver's seat, the Joint Staff's real purpose in life was to build consensus among the services on issues to facilitate approval of a policy or recommendation to the Secretary of Defense. Thus, the end product, in many cases, lacked true direction and force.

The "flimsy-buff-green-red striped" system of staffing was slow and burdensome. At every level, issues were worked and reworked until they satisfied everyone. In describing observations of the Steadman Report, Archie Barrett says "Only a minimum of

substantive content survives the process of editorial negotiation and compromise necessary to achieve 'agreed language' among the services and the Joint Staff."³⁰ Joint papers were staffed with the very officers on the service staffs responsible to protect the service's interests, thus not conducive to developing joint perspectives and taking into account the big picture. In his article in Parameters, September 1982, Hanne calls the relationship between the Joint and service staffs "incestuous"³¹ for this very reason.

As stated previously, prior to Goldwater-Nichols, assignment to a joint staff was considered the "kiss of death." The services did not send their best people to serve on the Joint Staff, sometimes using it as a dumping ground for officers who had outlived their usefulness in the field but were not yet ready nor able to retire. The quality was not on par with the rest of the service population, particularly in the areas of promotion, school selection, etc. The true road to success in the military lay in spending the most possible time in one's service, commanding tactical units in the Army and the Marines, command at sea in the Navy, and flying in the Air Force. And there is much to be said for this attitude. Experience in his chosen military trade is what makes an officer valuable; no one needs an officer who can work staff actions proficiently, but who has very little service knowledge and experience on which to base his decisions. However, the quality of officers sent to the Joint Staff was below reasonable expectations, with a resulting lack of consistently top-

quality work.

Additionally, officers assigned to joint billets went out of their way to get out of that assignment as quickly as possible in order to get on with salvaging their careers. The services were accommodating to this, and with no real control over stability in assignments, the Joint Staff suffered. The personnel turmoil and resulting loss of continuity clearly added to the lack of quality work produced by joint staffs.

COMMANDERS OF COMBATANT COMMANDS

With the responsibility to prepare for, and conduct combat operations in support of U.S. national interests, the CINCs faced several problems that made them less effective than they should have been. There was no formal, substantive method for the CINCs to develop and present input for the formulation of national military strategy. They found it difficult to influence policy at the DOD level. Therefore, the CINCs were responsible for executing plans in support of policies into which they had little or no input.

A similar issue but in a different arena centered around the fact that the CINCs had little or no formal input into resource development and allocation. "[M]ost CINCs have limited power to influence the capability of the forces assigned them. Although they provide inputs to the JCS on force structures and readiness, their views have no formal articulation in the budgetary decisions at either the service or the secretarial level."² "The Services

(and the components) ... have the major influence on both the structure and the readiness of the forces for which the CINC is responsible."''' This was partly due to JCS's lack of influence in this area also. Programmatic and budget input resided almost exclusively in the domain of the services, with little attention paid to those who spoke from the joint position. The CINCs relied on the services' component commanders to get the resource message to the people who could do something about it, namely the service secretaries and chiefs. Of course, service chiefs were prone to listen to CINCs out of sheer respect for either the person or the position, but were not obliged to do their bidding.

The issue of component commanders raises another sore point for the CINCs. There was no adequate concept of a unified command, particularly during peacetime, established between the CINCs and their service component commanders prior to Goldwater-Nichols. Component commanders were prone, in many cases, to side with his own service on issues. This is certainly understandable considering that fact that his future was in the hands of the service chief and not with the CINC. Component commanders could, and did, circumvent CINCs on issues. And in some cases, the CINC was not even sure which forces he would have for different contingencies. Additionally, his control of the training and preparation of forces in his area was almost non-existent. Service units went about their business as they saw fit, in some cases, with little regard for the requirements of the CINC.

And lastly, service chiefs sometimes regarded the unified or

specified commands primarily associated with their service as their own sub-kingdoms to oversee. It was the service chiefs only true doorway into the operational world (other than through the JCS), since they were relegated to the chore of organizing, training and equipping the forces with no responsibility for the conduct of war. And once again, it was possible for the service chief to "influence" a CINC of his service. This is not to say that this was routinely done, but the lack of clarity on who worked for whom, and no one person in charge at the top of the military ladder, caused consternation for the CINCs.

THE JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING SYSTEM (JSPS)

Prior to World War II, U.S. national military strategy was unheard of except in academic circles. After World War II, it arose as a necessary concept. But, as previously mentioned, any creative development and analyses of alternate strategies were overshadowed by the prevailing concern with Communist containment. As the world situation became more and more turbulent and complex, with many other threats to American interests surfacing around the world, critics of the military claimed that there was no clear, concise, easily understandable military strategy to guide the way of military efforts. Even within the military, there were complaints of operating with insufficient strategic guidance.

Memorandum of Policy (MOP) No. 84, originally issued in 1952, was the guiding document for the operation of the Joint Strategic Planning System. Over the years, there were many revisions, with

the last being completed in January 1989. Even with the numerous modifications, and the additional influence of the Goldwater-Nichols Act in 1986, the changes were relatively minor. The system was a complex and cumbersome one, requiring the development, staffing, and completion of ten major documents, and remained this way until major revisions produced a streamlined system approved by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in May 1989 and implemented via CJCS MOP 7 in January 1990.

According to the Department of the Army Staff, there were several deficiencies with the system as it existed. With the world security situation changing at such a rapid rate, the JSPS was unable to respond to these changes in a timely manner. Reviews were only conducted biannually, the number and size of the documents were prohibitive causing them not to be used, and there was little effect on the Defense Guidance (DG) and the service Program Objective Memoranda (POM). There was little top-down guidance, with the senior JCS leaders becoming involved too late. And, as will continue to be a criticism in other aspects of the JCS system, the JSPS documents required a consensus of all service chiefs which did not necessarily guarantee the best joint position, but rather a solution that was acceptable to all of the services.³⁴ Therefore, we had a burdensome system that created products that very few people paid attention to or took seriously.

Compounding the procedural problems of the JSPS itself was the effect that money, and the competition therefor, had on strategy formulation. Although the JSPS was supposed to work in conjunction

with the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System (PPBS) and the Joint Operation Planning System (JOPS), the PPBS clearly became the dominant influence in the overall military planning and execution structure, especially in the 60s, 70s and well into the 80s. Concerns over ensuring that military capabilities appropriate for the support of national security objectives were dwarfed by the pursuit of the defense dollar. The link between strategy and available resources was non-existent, or at best, inadequate. Instead of questions being asked about what capabilities were really needed and affordable to support national goals, and the most appropriate mix of those capabilities, the preponderance of effort went to maximizing the amount of money received by DOD as a whole, and then by the services as separate entities. As mentioned previously, services developed strategies to support their claims on the defense dollar, and management efficiencies were developed throughout DOD to get the most "bang for the buck." The objective became getting the most possible for a particular organization, regardless of whether that particular distribution of assets was appropriate to support the overall national security program.

The JSPS as it existed, and one could argue, as it exists today under CJCS MOP 7, was not the only cause for censure. Rather, it played a minor, although not insignificant, part in the inability to produce a relative and responsive national military strategy.

IV. THE GOLDWATER-NICHOLS ACT

CONGRESSIONAL INTENT

Although there have been several legislative and executive changes to the structure and operations of the Department of Defense since 1947, none have really caused the requisite changes to optimize the way the military does its business in responding to national security goals and objectives. In passing the Goldwater-Nichols Act, Congress intended to accomplish the following:

- "- to reorganize the Department of Defense and strengthen civilian authority in the Department;
- to improve the military advice provided to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense;
- to place clear responsibility on the commanders of the unified and specified combatant commands for the accomplishment of missions assigned to those commands;
- to ensure that the authority of the commanders of the unified and specified combatant commands is fully commensurate with the responsibility of those commanders for the accomplishment of missions assigned to their commands;
- to increase attention to the formulation of strategy and to contingency planning;
- to provide for more efficient use of defense resources;
- to improve joint officer management policies; and
- otherwise to enhance the effectiveness of military operations and improve the management and administration of the Department of Defense."³⁵

All of these listed intentions are consistent with Congressional policy statements found in the National Security Act of 1947 and which have flowed through all of the changes that have come about over the past 44 years. However, none of those changes have been able to bring the military precisely to where it needs to be as an organization. The Goldwater-Nichols Act was yet another attempt to solidify the military's operating practices so as to give America the best possible armed forces, capable of responding to, and

winning, any required contingency, all for a reasonable price.

REFORMS

Although Goldwater-Nichols deals with more issues, this paper will discuss only the following:

- the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to include the authority and responsibilities of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and his relationship to the President, the National Security Council, the Secretary of Defense, and the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff;

- the operation of the Joint Staff and its working relationship with the services' staffs;

- the education and management of joint officers; and

- the authority and responsibilities of the commanders of the combatant unified and specified commands.

As we will see, some of the significant resulting benefits were not the direct result of the Goldwater-Nichols legislation, but secondary effects of the new structure and procedures brought about by Goldwater-Nichols.

THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

One of the most sweeping changes of Goldwater-Nichols with respect to the JCS comes about because of the change in the role of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and his increase in authority and responsibility. He alone is now designated as the principal military advisor to the National Command Authority (NCA),

but remains outside of the formal chain of command which runs from the President to the Secretary of Defense to the CINCs. The service chiefs remain as advisors, but secondary to the CJCS. In the execution of his duties, the CJCS is required to consult with the service chiefs and CINCs "as he considers appropriate."³⁶ Those four words are very important.

If a service chief disagrees with the CJCS or the JCS on a particular issue, the CJCS is required to submit that opinion along with his own when it is submitted. There are provisions to preclude "foot-dragging" by a service in an attempt to kill an issue. The JCS as a body retains its prestige and influence, but the CJCS is now clearly in charge, with the mandate from Congress to run the show as the single responsible individual. It is this singular responsibility that mostly affects the procedures and the results.

In addition to the generic responsibilities that previously resided in the JCS as a whole, such as the strategic direction of the armed forces, the CJCS is now responsible for the following other significant tasks:

- evaluation and reporting to the Secretary of Defense on strategy-resource mismatches
- preparation of fiscally constrained strategic plans
- preparation and review of contingency plans
- net assessments and reporting of deficiencies
- a system to evaluate the readiness of the combatant commands
- representing the CINCs' priorities and resource requirements

to the NCA

- evaluation of service programs and budgets, with reports to Secretary of Defense on their appropriateness in supporting the CINCS

- alternate budget proposals

- assessment of military requirements for acquisition programs

- development of joint doctrine.³⁷

Although the CJCS presided over JCS meetings and set the agenda in the past, Goldwater-Nichols authorizes him to use his discretion in establishing the agenda by using the following wording:

"... the Chairman shall - ... provide agenda for the meetings of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (including, as the Chairman considers appropriate [underline added for emphasis], any subject for the agenda recommended by any other member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff)."³⁸

Giving him direct access into, and at least some control over, the bread and butter issues of the joint and service organizations within DOD, these added responsibilities certainly increase the status of the CJCS within the military community and strengthen his position, as was the intent of the Goldwater-Nichols Act. One might say that, although this seems to improve things within the military itself, there is no guarantee that the old criticisms of useless advice and minimal impact outside DOD will be remedied. This is a valid statement since, as we will discuss, the personalities and capabilities of the players will be a significant, if not the dominant, factor in how well the military performs and is perceived.

In addition to the increase of authority and responsibility of

the CJCS, Goldwater-Nichols created the position of Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (VCJCS). This position was created to assist in the substantial burden of the CJCS. He is not officially a member of the JCS unless he is acting as the CJCS in the CJCS's absence or disability. The VCJCS may take part in JCS meetings as he sees fit, and his duties are prescribed by the CJCS.

With the strengthening of the CJCS position and the emphasis on jointness dictated by the Goldwater-Nichols Act, the services were, in effect, removed from the direct control of military operational units. However, they still remain responsible to organize, train, and equip their units, and with that, exert significant influence on their units. And this makes sense. But the chain of command of the fighting units is now very clear, and does not include the service secretaries or chiefs.

THE JOINT STAFF

As stated previously, prior to Goldwater-Nichols, the Joint Staff supported the JCS as a body, and, therefore, really worked for all of the service chiefs. Because of Goldwater-Nichols, along with his increased authority and responsibilities, the CJCS was, in effect, given control of the Joint Staff. Its mandate now is to function as a normal coordinating and/or personal staff, responding to the direction and guidance of the CJCS (through the Director of the Joint Staff). Since the German experience in World War II, there has been a constant fear in this country of a general staff with executive power. Goldwater-Nichols specifically prohibits the

Joint Staff from exercising any executive power over any DOD elements.

As an aside, civilian control of the military, as stated in the Congressional intent, was an issue in some peoples' minds. Civilian control in the U.S. has never been a problem.³⁹ However, Congress felt it necessary to specifically include this restriction on the Joint Staff along with others (e.g., keeping the CJCS out of the chain of command) to placate the concerned, and to preclude any regression in the future.

JOINT STAFF OFFICER EDUCATION AND MANAGEMENT

To improve the quality of officers assigned to joint duty positions and to remedy management practices that hindered quality performance by the joint staffs, Goldwater-Nichols made several specific provisions. Joint duty was established as an occupational specialty (joint specialty officer [JSO]) for all services. Joint duty positions were codified and numbers set to establish requirements. Officers to be designated as JSOs were required to attend formal joint schooling, followed by an assignment to a joint duty position. To preclude the turmoil of personnel assignment turbulence, joint tour lengths were initially established to be at least 3 1/2 years for officers below flag rank. Promotion to flag rank now requires service in a joint billet. Officers selected to be promoted to general or admiral are required, prior to promotion, to attend the "Capstone Program" which is designed to ensure that all flag officers have a requisite level of joint knowledge and the

proper joint perspective. Flag officer joint tour length was established to be at least 3 years.

Additionally, promotion rates of officers having served, or currently serving, in joint assignments must be the same as those of officers serving on their service staffs and the service-specific officer population at large.

THE COMBATANT COMMANDS

The commanders of the unified and specified commands had to deal with a situation that was both unclear and frustrating in its design. Goldwater-Nichols set out specifically to clarify and strengthen the relative position of the CINCs and the combatant commands within the defense establishment. Past reorganizations attempted to define the chain of command, but confusion and vagueness remained in practice. Goldwater-Nichols clearly defined the chain of command as running from the President to the Secretary of Defense to the CINCs. The Secretary was authorized to use the assistance of the CJCS in the execution of his command responsibilities by placing him in the flow of communication, and has, in fact, chosen to do that, as stated in DOD Directive 5100.1.⁴⁰ The CJCS acts as the spokesman for the CINCs, and is responsible to oversee their activities and act on their behalf. The CINCs do have direct access to the Secretary of Defense, but an additional voice in the person of the CJCS can only be a help.

With respect to his relationship with his component commanders, the CINC now has more influence and control over the

units assigned to his theater. Goldwater-Nichols involves the CINC specifically in the selection and evaluation of component commanders, and requires that the CINC be kept appraised of all component activities. He now has court martial authority in his area, and enjoys significant administrative and support control in his command. Based on his contingency plans, the CINC now has the authority to organize the command to best suit accomplishment of the mission. Goldwater-Nichols also authorizes the CINCs to have their own budget for items such as joint exercises, forces training, contingencies, and selected operations, and formally places them in the resource management business.

V. POST-GOLDWATER-NICHOLS

The Goldwater-Nichols Act and the fallout from its legislation have caused significant changes in the way the military operates, particularly at the national level. The results of Goldwater-Nichols will be reviewed using the same categories as were used in Section IV. In addition, the Joint Strategic Planning System will be discussed briefly because of its transformation as one of the secondary outcomes of the Act.

THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

The effects of Goldwater-Nichols on the JCS are some of the most noticeable and far-reaching. With the position of the CJCS significantly enhanced in almost all areas of interest to the military, the principal of unity of effort is now practiced in the uniformed arena of DOD. As the principal advisor to the National Command Authority, the CJCS can now provide recommendations in his own right, released from the burden of having to get all of the members of the JCS to agree on a position. He consults with the service chiefs on issues, but can forward his own opinions even if there is no consensus among the JCS. If there is a dissenting view, the CJCS must forward this position with his opinion, but there have been very few incidents where this has been necessary. The CJCS also provides his own guidance to the Joint Staff, which now operates under his direction as opposed to the direction of the entire JCS. The Chairman sets the agenda of JCS meetings, with the

authority to entertain only those issues he feels are appropriate for that forum. If a service chief raises an issue that he (CJCS) feels inappropriate for the JCS, he can have it handled at a lower level or may choose not to deal with it at all.

As previously mentioned, to assist him with his chain of command duties and responsibilities, the current Secretary of Defense, with the authority provided in the Goldwater-Nichols Act, has placed the Chairman in the communication flow from himself (Secretary) to the CINCs. The Chairman, as stated previously, is not in the formal chain of command. The CINCs retain direct access to the Secretary of Defense, but also do a good deal, if not most, of their business through the CJCS. This, coupled with the increased control of the CINCs over the component commanders, has enhanced the CJCS's influence significantly. And to add more power to his position, the CJCS now contributes to resource and acquisition issues by reviewing services' programs, budgets, and acquisition programs, and assesses how well they support the requirements and priorities of the CINCs. This review and accompanying recommendations for alternatives, if necessary, are forwarded to the Secretary of Defense. Additionally, the CJCS assesses U.S. and allied capabilities as compared to those of potential adversaries, and reports to the Secretary on any capabilities deficiencies.

The service chiefs, in their JCS roles, have clearly lost some of the influence and autonomy they enjoyed prior to Goldwater-Nichols. They now concentrate on training, maintaining, equipping,

and deploying the forces, all in support of direction and guidance given by the CJCS and the CINCs. They are essentially out of the chain of influence of the operational forces, although they retain some influence merely by their position and affiliation with the service senior officers who command the operational forces.

The JCS, as a body, now operates as an organization with one person in charge giving direction and having the primary influence. The Chairman does not act in a vacuum when developing his guidance or recommendations, conferring with the service chiefs as he proceeds. However, if there is a difference of opinion, when the dust settles, the product will clearly be one that must, first and foremost, satisfy the CJCS.

Some would say that the CJCS always possessed sufficient power and influence to accomplish those things that he felt were in the best interests of the joint matters at hand. The service chiefs have always been the very best quality officers, with the highest standards of professionalism. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that this was true in most cases. However, as previously mentioned, some of the big disagreements were not over the trivial or routine matters, but rather over critical issues (See page 18 at endnote 25). Goldwater-Nichols formalized the authority and focused the singular responsibility in the position of the CJCS to minimize the possibility of less-than-adequate decisions or recommendations from the JCS in the future.

Now we come to a discussion of one of the most influential, if not the most influential, factor in the entire equation: the

personalities of the players. Things did not change immediately following the passage of Goldwater-Nichols, since such a shift in power and influence cannot be absorbed and integrated overnight into a system with such inertia as the military. Admiral Crowe, having served in the position of CJCS before and after the passage of Goldwater-Nichols, was seen by many, to include himself, as a transition Chairman. It was logical to expect reactions (not always positive) from the other members of the JCS when their position, influence, and authority in the joint arena was subordinated to that of the Chairman's. The body was transformed from a committee with all members having equal votes, to a council with one member, the Chairman, more equal than the others. Prior to Goldwater-Nichols, Admiral Crowe was able to capitalize on the professionalism of the Joint Chiefs and the respect he had earned to influence the actions of the JCS. Following the Act's passage, he continued to persuade and influence, while slowly injecting more and more of the given authority into the position of the Chairman. Many feel that Admiral Crowe was a perfect choice to be in the position of CJCS for the conversion from pre- to post-Goldwater-Nichols.

Coupling his many military assignments of both command and staff, with his serving in national-level positions such as the Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense and the National Security Advisor to the President, General Powell came to the Chairman's post with unique qualifications. In addition to being an excellent military leader, he is particularly capable of working

within the highest political environments. He deals with both ends of the political-military spectrum, from the lowest ranking soldier to the President of the United States, with aplomb and effectiveness, and he earns the respect of all with whom he serves. Although junior to some of the service chiefs and other officers in the services, he has been able to gain their support and cooperation. He is comfortable dealing with the complexities and conflicts in the political arena. All of this makes him an excellent choice for the position of Chairman, especially when considering the position's new authority and responsibilities.

Of course the personalities and experiences of other senior officials like the Secretary of Defense and the President, and the relationship between the Chairman and these leaders, have a great deal to do with how the military fares. General Powell and Secretary Cheney appear to have established a very solid relationship based on mutual trust and respect. And President Bush demonstrated during the recent Desert Shield/Desert Storm that he is confident in the U.S. forces' ability and will to win, and allowed the military to run the show for all intents and purposes. General Powell is also well respected in Congress. These circumstances have made it significantly easier for the General Powell to influence those actions appropriate for him to do so. In light of the experiences of the military undertakings in the recent past, one could say that the change, at least ostensibly brought about by the Goldwater-Nichols Act, has been extremely positive, and that we now have a military decision-making apparatus

at the national level that is particularly effective.

Because General Powell has been a member-in-good-standing of the current senior political-military team for some time, he has, as stated above, some unique talents and qualifications that make him especially effective in the role of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Therefore, his personality and capabilities compliment the authority given to the position of Chairman. What would happen if a less qualified officer were to be chosen as Chairman after General Powell leaves his position? Would the authority of Goldwater-Nichols alone suffice in making the Chairman effective? Probably not. Some would say that General Powell would have enjoyed the success he has even without the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act. Although we are talking about very respected and capable officers, the effectiveness of the Chairman is more dependent on the personality, capabilities and respect of the incumbent than on the legislative powers given to the position. And with that dependence on the individual or individuals comes a significant potential problem: if the senior player or players happen to be less than capable, which is not likely, but is a possibility, the efficiency, stature, and effectiveness of the senior military decision-making body will suffer.

THE JOINT STAFF AND JOINT STAFF OFFICER EDUCATION AND MANAGEMENT

With the Joint Staff now working for the Chairman instead of the entire JCS body, it now operates as a normal coordinating and/or personal staff. It no longer spends most of its time

building consensus on issues so that all of the services can agree on, and approve, the final positions taken. The Chairman gives his guidance to the staff through the Director of the Joint Staff, and the staff then proceeds with the action developing its own analysis and conclusions, coordinating with the services' staffs, and then reporting back to the Chairman. The position is no longer a "joint" position as previously defined (i.e., agreeable to all services), but rather a joint staff position either approved or disapproved by the Chairman.

With its new method of operation, the Joint Staff has attracted some critics who complain that the coordination and consultation with the services is inadequate in some cases. Staff actions are initiated and completed sometimes without the knowledge of, or at least without sufficient input from, the services. This feeling has been expressed by people ranging from service staff action officers to senior officials on both the Joint Staff and in the services. One explanation could be that, after being a consensus-builder for so long, the Joint Staff, in exercising its newly found authority and freedom, has gone somewhat overboard in the use of that authority and freedom. Another possible explanation could be that the better quality people now being sent to the Joint Staff (as discussed below) are used to acting independently and are more comfortable exercising their own initiative. One of the specific conditions of the Goldwater-Nichols Act prohibits the Joint Staff from acting as a general staff with executive or directive authority. Some feel that the

Joint Staff, as it currently operates, either violates that condition, or at least pushes the limits of that prohibition.

Goldwater-Nichols placed several requirements on the services with respect to the education and management of officers designated to be joint staff officers. Many of these requirements such as being "joint qualified" prior to being promoted to flag rank and ensuring that joint staff officers are promoted at the same rate as their non-joint contemporaries has, if not changed attitudes, certainly changed behaviors. Productive joint duty is now seen as a requirement for career success. All of the services now make a point of sending quality people to joint assignments, and promotion rates are closely monitored, since results must be reported periodically to Congress. Tour lengths have been stabilized which has improved continuity on the joint staffs. All of these initiatives have created a situation where the staff products are top quality, and joint issues are handled with more professional respect than in the past.

With these requirements came some administrative and management problems. There is an administrative burden associated with keeping record of promotion rates and preparing reports about those rates. Additionally, with officers facing the many requirements of their parent service to become qualified in their basic duties, there is little time to spend in assignments away from their services (e.g., infantry commander, ship captain, pilot and air unit commander). The lengthening of joint tour assignments, coupled with the tenacity with which DOD holds the

services to meeting quotas and quality cuts, has created a personnel manager's nightmare. Many previously sought-after assignments within the services, such as instructor at a service academy, are now out of the reach of most officers who are concerned with meeting the joint "hurdles" necessary for success. There simply is not enough time to do it all.

At this point, a brief discussion of the Joint Strategic Planning System (JSPS) is in order to demonstrate a secondary effect brought about by the Goldwater-Nichols Act. As previously discussed, the JSPS was a slow, complex, and burdensome system which produced questionable results. The major documents produced were numerous, and in some cases never used. With the increase in the authority and responsibility of both the Chairman and the Joint Staff, the system has been streamlined and appears to have the potential to create worthwhile products. Revision to the Joint Chiefs of Staff Memorandum of Policy No. 84, initiated changes in the JSPS, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Memorandum of Policy No. 7 (notice the change in whose document it is) finalized the streamlining of the system.⁴¹ One of the improvements comes from the Chairman's ability to set the tone of the planning by presenting his vision of where the military should be going in the future. No longer is the initial guidance for planning a conglomerate of services' positions which led to vague and indecisive direction. Joint strategic planning is now based on the world according to the Chairman, of course, in concert with the other Joint Chiefs. But ultimately, the guidance is the

responsibility of no one else but the Chairman.

The number of major documents has been reduced from ten in the system that existed immediately prior to, and shortly after, Goldwater-Nichols, to four as the system exists today. Much of the information from the former set of documents has been consolidated to make up the new set of documents. The jury is still out on the new JSPS since we are currently in only the second iteration, but it looks to have promise.

THE COMBATANT COMMANDS

Another dramatic change brought about by the Goldwater-Nichols Act has been the increase in authority and influence of the CINCs. Their responsibilities remain basically the same as before the Act, but they now have the wherewithal to execute their responsibilities properly. Whereas prior to Goldwater-Nichols, the CINCs had tenuous control over their component commanders, they now have direct and thorough control over the actions of the service units assigned to their area as they pertain to the accomplishment of the CINC's assigned missions. And if a CINC feels that the control he does have is insufficient, he can present his case to the Secretary of Defense.

He is now free to organize his command in a manner he determines most fitting for the situation, and he is clearly the one person directly responsible to prepare and execute contingency plans for his area. Desert Storm, although only the first true

test, is an excellent example of how a contingency should be handled. General Schwarzkopf, understanding clearly his responsibilities, developed the plans that eventually became Desert Storm. He was able to establish the configuration of the forces which were to execute the plans, and the component commanders clearly understood that they worked for him during this operation. Back in Washington, the delineation of responsibilities was maintained. The President, comfortable with the abilities of the armed forces and its leaders, allowed the military to execute its tasks, only becoming involved in major policy decisions. The Secretary of Defense and the Chairman made an excellent team who provided General Schwarzkopf with the guidance, assistance, and support he needed to get the job done. And the job was done well, in large part due to the training and motivation of the service members, but also because of the organizational structure and the method of operation from top to bottom.

In addition to the changes in organizational procedures, the CINCs now enjoy an increased involvement in strategy formulation, more say in the resource business, and greater input to the acquisition process through the CJCS. All of these were shortcomings prior to Goldwater-Nichols. The CINCs were responsible to fight the wars, but had little or no say in how, with what forces, with what equipment, and what equipment should be developed and procured to satisfy future requirements. Although authorized to become deeply involved in these issues, the CINCs' primary responsibility remains the preparation for, and successful

conduct of, any war that may erupt in their areas. Particularly in the resource allocation arena where the CINCs are not sufficiently staffed to provide in depth input, they are still not completely involved, nor, as some would propose, are they inclined to become more involved. They continue to concentrate their efforts on their immediate or near-term contingencies.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The Goldwater-Nichols Act was a catalyst for many improvements in the nature of U.S. senior military decision making, clearly emphasizing the need to improve "jointness". The increase in authority and responsibilities of the Chairman has had a positive effect on the organizational capabilities of the military. Singular responsibility, coupled with sufficient authority, in the position of Chairman has definitely supplanted the committee nature of the JCS with a badly needed unity of effort. Inter-service rivalries no longer plague the JCS system to the extent they did in the past; they do not have any significant effect on the overall joint decision-making process. Guidance and decisions are clear and determined, not watered-down and vague to accommodate a position acceptable to all services.

However, it must be recognized that the personalities and capabilities of the current key players (President Bush, Secretary Cheney and General Powell, in particular), and the relationship that exists among them and others (such as the Secretary of State and the National Security Advisor), all have the predominant effect on the credibility and efficiency of the national-level military decision-making machine. It is pretty tough to beat a team consisting of men like those mentioned above, with the experience they all have, and with the teamwork and mutual respect they have developed by working closely with each other for many years. A team of players not used to working with each other, not sharing

the same general views, and having no internalized basis for mutual respect and trust, may not perform as well.

The Joint Staff now operates in the realm of a real staff. Although problems have been discussed in terms of the Joint Staff overpowering the service staffs, that pendulum will swing back to the appropriate center with the continued vigilance of senior officials in the services and on the Joint Staff. Exuberance is to be expected after a long period of being relegated to adjusting and reforming issues so that they are agreeable to everyone. The senior leaders on all staffs involved are professionals, and will not let this get out of hand. The quality of the individual going to joint assignments has greatly improved. Formal joint schooling for officers prior to the assignment and the reduction in personnel turmoil have also contributed to the improvement in the quality of joint work.

The CINCs have moved to their rightful position as the war fighters in the military complex. Their increase in authority and influence has been extremely positive. Their involvement in the resource arena, although not extensive, will probably mature as time passes, especially with the onset of diminishing revenues for the military.

As we have seen, many positive things have happened to the military following the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act in

1986. Some of those have been the result of the Act, but some of those have been the result of the personalities and capabilities of the key participants in the national military decision-making process. The legislation presented in the Act has certainly complimented the situation as it exists today, but is not the entire cause for the efficiency of operation and prestige enjoyed by the military today. Even without the Act, some of the benefits we see accruing would have been realized anyway; the Act formalized it all. This is not to say that we are immune to backsliding if the team at the top consists of less capable people or does not function well together. In any case, the Goldwater-Nichols Act came at an opportune moment in history, and has provided us with the catalyst for positive movement in the military. At this point in time, it appears that we now have sufficient legislation, and any other minor changes or adjustments can be made from within the Defense Department itself.

ENDNOTES

1.Arthur F. Lykke, Jr., Military Strategy: Theory and Application, p. 3.

2.Ibid., p. 4.

3.Jeffrey Record, Beyond Military Reform, p. 8.

4.Ibid.

5.Millet, Allan R. et al, The Reorganization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff: A Critical Analysis, p. 9.

6.Millet, p. 13.

7. Ibid.
8. David Packard, A Quest for Excellence, p. xvii.
9. AFSC Pub 1, The Joint Staff Officer's Guide 1991, p. 5-4.
10. Ibid.
11. Richard Steadman, Report to the Secretary of Defense on the National Military Command Structure, p. 25.
12. Ibid.
13. Association of the United States Army, Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 - A Primer, p. 4.
14. U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, Defense Organization: The Need For Change, p. 15.
15. Ibid.
16. Jeffrey McKittrick, "The JCS: Evolutionary or Revolutionary Reform?", p. 63.
17. Lawrence Korb, The Joint Chiefs of Staff. The First Twenty-Five Years, p. 17.
18. Ibid., p. 18.
19. John Vessey, "The Purple World", p. 58.
20. Packard, p. 35.
21. Korb, p. 25.
22. L.J. Moses, The Call for JCS Reform: Crucial Issues, p. 8.
23. Ibid.
24. Korb, p. 22.
25. Ibid., p. 24.
26. Korb, p. 24.
27. Ibid., p. 21.
28. Steadman, p. 37.
29. Ibid.
30. Archie Barrett, Reappraising Defense Organization, p. 104.

31. William Hanne, "An Armed Forces Staff", Parameters, September 1982, p. 58.
32. Steadman, p. 33.
33. Ibid.
34. Information Briefing, DAMO-SSP, Joint Strategic Planning System, 5 Apr 90.
35. Public Law 99-433 - Oct. 1, 1986, Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, Section 2.
36. Public Law 99-433 - Oct. 1, 1986, Title II, Section 151.
37. These were taken from several sources to include the Goldwater-Nichols Act (Public Law 99-433), the AUSA DOD Reorganization Act of 1986 - A Primer, and AFSC Pub 1, The Joint Staff Officer's Guide 1991.
38. Public Law 99-433 - Oct. 1, 1986, Title II, Section 151.
39. U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, Defense Organization: The Need For Change, pp. 25 - 45.
40. AFSC Pub 1, p. 2-11.
41. Joint Chiefs of Staff Memorandum of Policy No. 84, 16th revision, issued 14 May 1986, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Memorandum of Policy No. 7, issued 30 January 1990.

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