

The Heritage Lectures

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Reshaping the Joint Chiefs of Staff

A Roundtable of
The Heritage Foundation
Defense Assessment Project

Edited by Theodore J. Crackel



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Contributors

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Hon. Les Aspin (D-Wisconsin) currently is serving his seventh term in the U.S. House of Representatives. He is a graduate of Yale University, a Rhodes scholar, and earned a Ph.D. in economics at M.I.T. Rep. Aspin is a member of the House Armed Services Committee and chairs the Subcommittee on Military Personnel and Compensation.

Jeffrey Barlow is a Senior Research Analyst at the National Institute for Public Policy. He took his Ph.D. in international relations at the University of South Carolina and spent four years as a Heritage Foundation Policy Analyst. He has worked extensively with the Omar Bradley Papers, and is the author of a forthcoming volume on the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the Kennedy years.

John Kester is a Washington attorney who has twice left his practice for extended periods to serve at the Pentagon. He has been a Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army and more recently a special assistant to Secretary of Defense Harold Brown.

John Pustay recently retired from the Air Force as a Lieutenant General. He is former President of the National Defense University, and served as Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Richard Steadman is a New York business executive. A former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, he is the author of the 1978 *National Military Command Structure Study*, dealing with the reorganization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Introduction

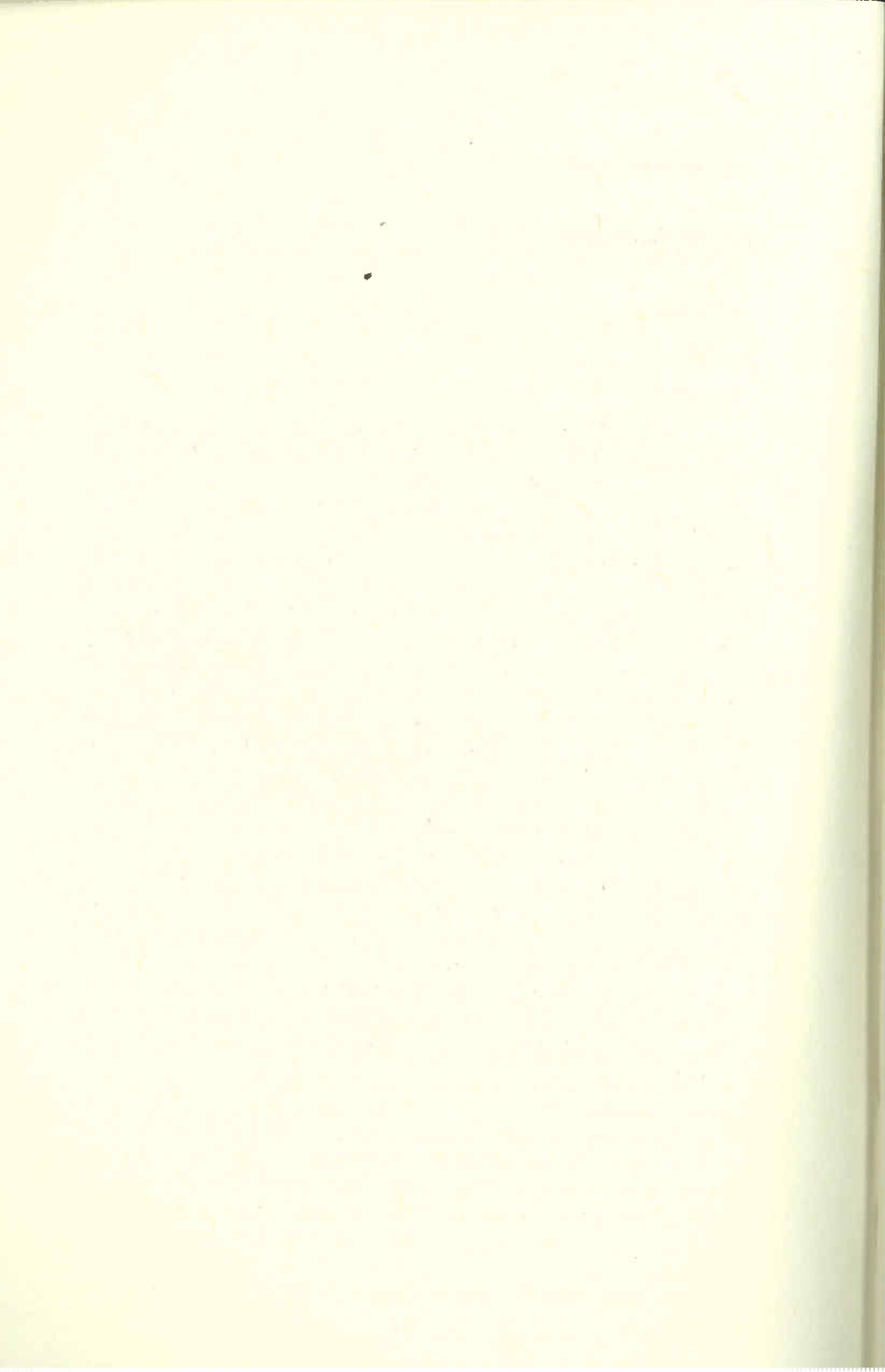
The Defense Assessment Project of The Heritage Foundation has been examining U.S. defense affairs and how they might be conducted more effectively in terms of structure and process.

It has become clear that addressing process issues, such as strategy formulation, budgeting, acquisition, and service roles and missions, entailed dealing first with key structure problems. Service dominance and parochialism—and on the opposite side of the coin, alleged weakness on the part of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS)—are responsible for many difficulties. There is no one agency responsible for formulating military strategy—a clear joint responsibility. Resource allocation appears to be made too often on the basis of compromise between the Services rather than in response to a comprehensive “joint” strategic design. The Joint Chiefs of Staff input in that process is said to be ignored too often because it repeatedly has lacked substance or timeliness or both.

As a part of the effort to address the central structural issues, the Defense Assessment Project sponsored three roundtables. The first, presented here, focused on proposals to reorganize the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The second examined proposals to reorganize the civilian bureaucracies—the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Service Secretariats. The third addressed the impact of proposed changes on the improved coordination of strategy and resources.

The roundtables brought together experts with various perspectives on the issues. The Heritage Foundation believes that such careful examination and debate will form a useful contribution to a more effective U.S. defense.

Burton Yale Pines
Vice President
The Heritage Foundation



Lt. Colonel Theodore J. Crackel, Moderator: Welcome to The Heritage Foundation and to the first of a series of roundtables sponsored by the Foundation and its Defense Assessment Project, which I direct.

There have been many calls recently for Pentagon reorganization. These have included calls for reorganization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to strengthen the role of the Chairman and for the reorganization of the civilian defense bureaucracy to reduce duplication and Service dominance. The essence of this is a return to the military some of the functions relegated to the civilian sector in recent years and calls for a new emphasis on professional military judgment in decision making, particularly as to the relation between strategy and procurement. These proposals will be the topics of subsequent roundtables.

Today's panelists include Dr. John Pustay, Dr. Jeffrey Barlow, Congressman Les Aspin, Mr. John Kester, and Mr. Richard Steadman.

Each speaker will direct a portion of his opening remarks to the House bill for reorganizing the Joint Chiefs of Staff which passed in October 1983. The bill is based on a similar bill, passed in 1982 but not acted upon by the Senate, and includes the provisions of an Administration sponsored bill, which placed the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the chain of command and removed some of the restrictions on the size of the Joint Staff and the time military officers could serve.

The House bill (H.R. 3718) provides for several major changes. The first, as proposed by the Administration, places the Chairman formally in the chain of command. The second, again as the Administration proposed, removes the tenure restrictions for Joint Staff officers and the size limitations on the Joint Staff. The House, moreover, further strengthened the position of the Chairman, first by making him an advisor in his own right. (Current legislation provides that the Chairman speak for the corporate body of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.) Second, he was to be a full-fledged member of the National Security Council, where before, speaking for the corporate body of Joint Chiefs of Staff, he has been only an advisor.

The third new provision would have the Chairman supervising the Joint Staff directly, rather than on behalf of the corporate entity of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The last provision would improve the quality of officers on the Joint Staff, by specifying that each Service should provide to the Chairman for his selection a list of officers considered to be the most highly qualified.

These are the major provisions of the bill. They would strengthen the role of the Chairman and accordingly they would also change the role of the Service Chiefs, and of the JCS as we know it.

Since Mr. Richard Steadman is in a very real way godfather of this debate, I have asked him to be the first to address the provisions of this bill.

Mr. Richard Steadman: I want to thank The Heritage Foundation, particularly as I am rather far on the other side of the political spectrum from the board of this Foundation, for making possible this examination of what is in many ways an arcane, although extremely important, subject, namely the organization of the professional military. Second I want to disavow what Ted said about my being the godfather of this debate—it has been going on in an unstructured way for many years. The most recent amendment to the National Security Act, which this House bill also would be, was in 1958. That is a lot of years for the basic law that put in place the organizational structure that has governed the Department of Defense and its components for so long. I would commend to anybody who wants a brief education on the subject the report of the House Committee staff on what they call H.R. 3718. In that report they summarize not only their analysis of existing conditions but the rationale behind the changes they propose, and they do it in what I found to be a commendably brief and concise manner.

This bill is composed of two integrated but separable parts. One relates to the function of the professional military as advisors on national security policy issues, and the other relates to their role as executors or commanders in support of that policy. I support the bill as it is now drafted and hope both parts are passed. In each of those two components, the bill represents a strong package as to the multiple problems in the present system. It is an evolutionary rather than a revolutionary change, and it should be instituted. In looking at the two separate components, advice and command, advice comes first.

People talk of this as a bill that strengthens the Chairman in the role of advice. I prefer to look at it as a bill that strengthens a central uniformed bureaucracy—the Joint Staff—in support of examining, analyzing, and preparing recommendations on matters of joint uniformed military interest. It does that in several ways, but most importantly, in ensuring that the Services will offer to that staff highly qualified officers from whom the Chairman will make his selection of those persons he wants on the staff. It provides certain career incentives or directs the Secretary to provide certain career incentives for promotion in relation to that. It stipulates indirectly how the staff's business is to be conducted; indirectly by making it clear that the staff is expected to produce independent work in consultation but not in coordination with the Service staffs and then to

provide the Service staffs or the individual Chiefs through their Service staffs with a right to comment on any of the policy recommendations that the Joint Staff makes to the Chiefs, prior to there being a formal submission to the Chiefs.

In this way the bill attempts to eliminate the present multiple coordination system—the rainbow system—which almost everybody agrees waters down the formal work of the Joint Staff and the Joint Chiefs of Staff as it now exists to the extent that the consumers of that work find it to be of little use. Finally it mandates the Secretary of Defense to ensure that the Joint Staff is organized and operated in a way that fulfills the mandated functions of the Joint Chiefs. While it is true from a legal point of view that a Secretary of Defense could always instruct the Chiefs to do this, that, or something else in relation to their organization, to my knowledge he never has done so, and no Secretary has ever suggested to the Chiefs that they ought to conduct their business in this way or that way. This draft law makes it very clear that it is the responsibility of the Secretary to see that the JCS organizational system is working properly.

Finally on the advice side, the bill provides for the Chairman to give military advice “in his own right” and not as a representative of the corporate body. In so doing, the Chairman has, for the first time, access to—called supervision of, I believe (I am not sure of the language; it is not “command of” but either “supervision of” or “direction of”)—the Joint Staff. He has never had that before. The Joint Staff has always been a communal staff and never a staff which the Chairman could supervise directly.

This is a very big change. And it would be a means of having the Chairman address, in an institutional rather than the current personal way, issues which the Joint Chiefs as a corporate body are really functionally incapable of addressing because of the inherently controversial nature of these issues as they relate to the interests of each individual Service. These are the most important policy issues that any Secretary of Defense must address, and he must do so absent assistance from institutionalized military advice. These are budget and force structure issues, roles and missions issues, unified command system issues, in short the toughest, most controversial, and most important military issues (excepting the employment of force and arms control).

On the issue of command, John Kester and I are going to have an argument as to what the bill means. (That may mean that there is some ambiguity in it.) But I do not find any ambiguity. The present law is clear that the Chiefs are not in the chain of command. A DoD (Department of Defense) directive exists—actually two directives—in which the Joint

Chiefs of Staff are put in the chain of command by having orders or directives go from the Secretary through the Joint Chiefs to the unified commanders and to their subcomponents. A second directive provides that the Chairman will act for the Chiefs in matters that are time sensitive. This bill would put into law the two directives and stipulate that the chain of command runs from the President to the Secretary through the Chairman and to the unified commands. There will be an argument as to the difference between "to" and "through," but there is a big difference, and the words are used deliberately.

In my judgment, this would institutionalize what now exists in an informal way. But in so institutionalizing it in law, the biggest impact would not be in the way commands are now issued to the field, but rather in clearly taking all of the Chiefs out of the command structure. It would make more difficult the multiple kinds of "back channel" commands that the Services now engage in in trying to control their forces which have been assigned to a unified command. There now would be no excuse for that, and the penalties for doing it or being caught doing it would escalate. I think that is an important change.

The second thing it does on the command side—and here I must read the bill to avoid further arguments with John Kester—is that it says "subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary, the Chairman supervises the commanders of the combatant commands and acts as their spokesman on operational requirements." Once again some people may consider the language ambiguous, but I think it has been used deliberately.

I think it has been put this way to emphasize that the Chairman is not authorized to issue a command to these component commanders—the field commanders. He supervises them in the name of the Secretary. He oversees what they do. He reviews what they do. He evaluates what they are doing for the Secretary. And secondly he acts as a central military spokesman for the views of the field commanders to the Secretary. In the notes that accompany this bill, it is clear that the authors believe that in making this provision they were not only strengthening the supervisory management of the field commanders, but also were providing the field commanders with better and clearer access to a central military voice in Washington.

Mr. John Kester: I am a little chagrined after hearing Dick's remarks, first of all because I have such great respect for Dick Steadman and for the work he has done in this area. He really did contribute greatly to initiating inquiry into the way the military staff system functions. The

other reason I am chagrined is that, as you may know, there are certain risks involved when you disagree in public with a godfather, and yet that is the position I find I am in.

Along with Dick, I have been one of the persons who for three or four years have been pushing for some fundamental changes in the organization of the senior military staff of the Department of Defense. I think we need a much stronger central staff. The spirit of my remarks is that something big should be done, and that I think something much better can be done than what the current House bill would accomplish—a bill which, I would add, was really not carefully considered by the House when it was passed.

The problems I have with the House bill are these.

First, the Joint Chiefs of Staff as it operates today, and as most observers agree, is really not functioning as a central staff—which is what this country needs and what many countries have. Instead, the positions of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff that serves them are dominated by the four individual Services. One of the problems is that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff must have more power.

Perhaps the biggest difficulty with the House bill—surely my biggest disappointment with it—is that it gives the illusion of dealing with the central problem, but fails to do so. To the extent that the House bill would strengthen the position of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—which is a good objective—it makes the mistake of strengthening the Chairman not at the expense of the parochial interests of the four Service bureaucracies, but rather at the expense of the Secretary of Defense. That is a serious mistake. That is not what is wrong with the current system. To draw on the wisdom of a one-time official of the previous Administration, I believe it was Bert Lance who said, “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” What this bill does is fix things that are not “broke,” while neglecting some very real problems.

First of all, the bill puts the Chairman on the National Security Council as a member. As matters currently function, the Chairman attends meetings of the National Security Council, and his staff is represented in the staff operations of the NSC, so why not make him a member? First, it is totally unnecessary; to do so would not accomplish anything positive. The Chairman’s advice is there; his staff work is there to the extent it is needed. The second thing wrong with making the Chairman an NSC member, as several military officers pointed out at a recent conference, is that it tends toward politicization of the Office of Chairman. It tends to make the Chairman a member of an incumbent Administration. There could be arguments saying that a President certainly should have a

Chairman on the NSC in whose views he had a fair degree of agreement, one whom he trusted. That is an issue worthy of debate in its own right, but I do not see that there is any useful end to be served by putting a Chairman in a position of policy making that is really not appropriate to the office as it has been conceived heretofore.

The proposal of putting the Chairman on the NSC also errs in giving him an office in the government of the United States that does not derive from the Secretary of Defense. It makes the Chairman an independent official of the government, not under the Secretary. Over a very brief period of time, this almost certainly would lead to separate staffs. It would lead to the Chairman taking positions separate from those of the Secretary, and operating with a staff for his NSC work, in whose deliberations staff members no doubt would say the Secretary of Defense had no legitimate interest. It is an invitation for going around the Secretary of Defense; and, I would say parenthetically, in spite of the rather impressive trappings of the office the Secretary of Defense in our government, it is weak when viewed relative to its responsibilities. The office needs all of the support it can get and does not need to be eroded in this fashion.

The second big flaw in the bill has to do with putting the Chairman in the chain of command by statute. Again, what the bill addresses here is simply not a problem. The chain of command operates satisfactorily at the top levels right now. To the extent that the objective is—and I think it may have been the original objective of the House Committee—to put the Chairman instead of the corporate body of the JCS, as is the current practice, in the role of transmitter of the Secretary's orders, I see no problem. But it should be done by the Secretary of Defense and by his directive, as the current transmittal chain is prescribed now.

As a general proposition, I would suggest that Congress really does not have any legislative authority over the chain of command. The chain of command is shorthand for talking about an aspect of the President's authority as Commander-in-Chief. And how the President chooses to pass down to subordinates his orders as Commander-in-Chief is something that is not a legitimate subject of congressional consideration.

Curiously, the Administration suggested that particular provision of the bill—at the behest of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I take it—apparently without thinking through what it means as a constitutional matter. But this is up to the President and it is he and his delegate, the Secretary of Defense, who must decide.

As a policy judgment, I do not think the Chairman should be in the chain of command. He should occupy the role that the corporate body

occupies now—in transmitting the Secretary's orders—and not giving orders in his own right. Unlike Dick Steadman, I find ambiguity in the bill in this respect. If the bill does not mean to put the Chairman in the role of giving orders independently, it ought to say so. It ought not to rely on one possible interpretation of overly vague language. Back in the 1950s, President Eisenhower was very careful to remind the Congress (on more than one occasion) that the proper role of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and of the Chairman was as staff—not as commanders.

This leads to my third major objection to the bill, which is that the bill as interpreted by the General Counsel of the Department of Defense makes the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff the commander of the combatant forces of the United States. In the House Report on this subject, a letter sent to the House from the General Counsel before the bill was passed says:

To the extent that this provision would set aside or qualify the existing prohibition that forbids the Chairman from exercising command over any of the Armed Forces the Department of Defense is opposed. That the bill does indeed contemplate this result is indicated. It is one thing to place the Chairman in the national chain of command; it is quite another to vest him with supreme military command in his own right.

That is the legislative history of the bill. Now if the bill does not mean to do that, it certainly ought to be amended to say so. Otherwise, any respectable lawyer interpreting the bill is going to say, "This must be what it means to do, because the Department advised the House to that effect and the House did not disclaim that was its intention." The House then went ahead and passed the bill.

I am not at all sure that the members of the House who voted on the bill thought that is what they were doing. The Senate, therefore, has a marvelous opportunity to clean up that particular provision. There has never been a uniformed officer in the United States who was the commander of all the Armed Forces. I do not think even George Washington before the Constitution would have fit that description; I do not think that he commanded the Continental Navy, although I could be wrong on that. We do not need to review two centuries of tradition in connection with this bill, as this is not where the problems lie in our military command structure.

Finally, there are some small points on some minor provisions in the House bill. I note that it fails to establish a Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, which the 1982 version of the bill would have done. The position of Vice Chairman would be very useful, and should be established.

Also, there are provisions in the House bill having to do with selection and assignment of officers, and providing for certifications to the President as to whether officers have had enough joint duty for promotion to the senior general and flag officer ranks. These are makework provisions that do not belong in legislation at all. Essentially their effect in terms of improving the Joint Chiefs and the Joint Staff would be nil.

In summary, I had thought three years ago that practically anything that would alter the current JCS system would be an improvement. The House bill has led me to have second thoughts about that position. I think that the current House bill really is worse than nothing—both because of the provisions it does contain and because it wastes the opportunity, which I think we have about once per generation, to do something serious about the military command structure of the United States. Our military structure has really not changed in any major degree since 1947. If you want to look back, the time period from the Spanish-American War to World War II is approximately the same as the time from World War II to the present. We are operating under a forty-year-old military staff arrangement. We need to take advantage of the current opportunity. The Senate has a golden opportunity to come up with a bill that really does address what needs to be done—which in my view is something along the lines of what General Edward C. Meyer, former Army Chief of Staff, advocated, with a couple of exceptions. What is needed is to set up a strong Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, but not at the expense of the Secretary of Defense, and to give that Chairman real sway over the Services. That is what I hope the Senate will do in revising the House bill and starting over.

Representative Les Aspin: Dick Steadman says that he does not know whether the words were carefully chosen or whether they were ambiguous, and the answer is they were both. They were carefully chosen and, in a sense, deliberately ambiguous. On this whole issue there is, I think, a remarkable degree of agreement on what the problem is that we are trying to solve.

Basically what we are dealing with is a JCS problem of two kinds. First, the people who are on the JCS are also heads of their Services—two full-time jobs and one person to do it. Second, these two full-time jobs contain a conflict of interest. They cannot adequately and fervently represent their Service and at the same time adequately and fervently represent a combined view of things. On this point there is essentially widespread agreement. All the people who came to testify before our committee were generally in agreement on that.

There was also agreement, I thought, on the general direction in which necessary reforms should go. There was a general feeling that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs should be strengthened; that the capability of the Chairman to direct the Joint Staff should be improved; that his position in the chain of command should be improved—to formalize his relationship with the CINCs (Commanders-in-Chief of the unified and specified commands who direct the operating forces); and that there should be more crisp military advice on a whole range of issues to the Secretary of Defense and the President. Now, all who testified on those reform proposals were generally in agreement. I am not saying they were in agreement 100 percent; the Navy was a problem. What differences did exist were over the degree and the extent of the reforms. The House bill, I think, is probably the minimum necessary.

Let me give some examples of what the bill does. Incidentally, the issue between Dick Steadman and John Kester has been well put. The bill does put the Chairman of the JCS more in the line of command, but it does not specifically put him in command. At no place does it say in so many words that the CINCs or the commanders of the unified command shall report to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It does not deliberately set it out in black and white. It also puts the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff more directly in control of the staff. But there are a lot of weasel words in there. At no point does it say the Chairman of the JCS runs the staff. It uses words like “manages the staff.” No one who runs his own staff thinks of himself as managing the staff. Managing implies that one has assets received from someone else and organizes them. A staff director is somebody who decides what staff he needs and organizes it. Carefully chosen words.

The third thing it does is to allow the Chairman of the JCS more leeway to advise the President and the Secretary of Defense. There is a phrase in there that says that he can offer his advice independent of the Joint Chiefs, but it in no place says he is the principal military advisor to the Secretary of Defense and the President of the United States. The philosophy behind this bill was to remove the impediments to a person who wanted to be a strong Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. It would theoretically allow the Chairman the tools to be able to have more of a command. The difficulty is that we are dealing with a system that has become encrusted over time and it is going to take more than a little nudge to get this system moving in that direction.

If this House bill had been passed in 1958, I think that it could possibly have worked. A strong Chairman could have taken command the way Secretary McNamara used what was given to him in the 1958 law to take

command of the civilian side of the operation. Somebody probably would have taken command and the system would be more workable. The problem is that now this system has grown up with certain norms and certain kinds of informal arrangements. There is nothing in the law, for instance, that says that the Joint Chiefs of Staff have to send forth unanimous opinions—it just works out that way.

As you know, there are a whole lot of little ways of doing business that this is not going to change. In this regard the bill should be more explicit. If you want the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Deputy that you give him, or a national military authority if you give him some more assets, to be the principal military advisor to the President and the Secretary of Defense, you ought to say so. If you want the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to run the Joint Staff—and I think you do—you ought to say so. And leaving aside the problems that John Kester has, if you decide that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff should be in the chain of command and be the person that the CINCs report to, you ought to say so. The big failing of the bill is that at this point it does not say what it wants.

I think that what John Kester says about putting the Chairman on the NSC is probably correct. It was not a major point in the bill as the House looked at it. If somebody had objected in the Subcommittee, it would have been dropped, but nobody paid a whole lot of attention to it. I think the points that John makes in opposition to that are rather telling, and I think that is an easy thing to be fixed. I would not worry about its survival. As a practical matter I do not know whether it matters much because the NSC is pretty much a floating crap game—who is in on the meetings and not in on the meetings depends on the President and not what the law says. But I think it is an important point that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs becomes a member of the Administration if he is put on that panel.

This whole idea of making the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs a member of the NSC should be handled carefully. If he becomes what the British call the Chief of the Defense Staff, which is what we are heading toward, there is a tendency that each Administration will want its own person in there, and that is not a particularly good idea. So if it causes trouble, drop that provision. I do not think that is the main problem, however.

The second important issue is what this bill does not address. This part of the controversy is at the core of the differences between what General Meyer and what General David Jones, former Chairman of the JCS, were suggesting. It is the issue of whether you ought to separate the Joint Chiefs of Staff from their Service responsibilities, which this bill does not deal with at all. The Jones position is to strengthen the Chairman, but

essentially leave the Joint Chiefs of Staff to be composed of Service Chiefs. The Meyer position is to have a Joint Chiefs of Staff unrelated to the Service Chiefs, and then the Service Chiefs as a separate operation. There are also intermediate positions suggested by several of the witnesses who testified before the Committee. Harold Brown suggested creating a Chairman and a Vice Chairman and making them separate—not bringing anybody else with them.

Another possibility suggested by other witnesses was expanding the Joint Chiefs of Staff: leaving the Service Chiefs on but adding some other people who are working on joint matters on a full-time basis so you do not totally divorce what the Joint Staff is doing from what the Services are doing—that's the concern you would have with the Meyer proposal. But clearly this bill does not go into that, and I think that almost by default it is leaning toward the Jones position. I do not know whether it is really the right one. I think we ought to tilt more toward the Meyer position.

Almost all of the discussion during the hearings on this bill and other related bills focused on the issue of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. There are two other issues which have not been given anywhere near the same degree of discussion, debate, or thought. One of those is something the bill tries to address—the Joint Staff. The issue is how do you get high quality people to go into the Joint Staff and how do you get them to have a national outlook when they have come from and presumably will go back to Services. How do you get them to do that without damaging their career or putting them in these conflict-of-interest kind of situations? I do not think that our bill addresses that adequately. And I do not think the debate has adequately addressed that point yet either. Some people like Bob Komer suggested a two-track promotion system: promoting some people through joint service and other people through Services. I do not know whether this is the answer, but we have not discussed it very adequately.

The second thing we have not adequately discussed is the unified and specified commands, the CINCs. How do you strengthen their hand vis-à-vis the component commanders—because the old golden rule is “he who has the gold makes the rule.” The guys with the assets run the show. You may have a very good CINCEUR (Commander-in-Chief, European Command), but we all know the Air Force has its own ideas, and they are sitting there with an awful lot of assets. CINCEUR is trying to find out what the Air Force is doing, not telling them what to do. So there is the problem of the CINCs. And then if they have to report back only to the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Defense has limited amounts of time to devote to that kind of issue. So you put a strong Undersecretary for Policy like Bob Komer in, and he starts issuing orders for contingency

planning and other things. But we ought to think through what we want the CINCs to do. Maybe they need some planning staffs, but they certainly need to be strengthened.

Two cautions. First, unanticipated results. Congress is in the reform business almost full time. They are reforming themselves; they are reforming the nominating process for President; they are reforming here and reforming there. One thing for sure is the emergence of the law of unanticipated effects. That is, no matter how you think a reform is going to work out, it is going to work out differently. The more time and thought you give it, the closer you come to being right. But always there is something that you did not expect. So I think that this whole area needs a lot more time and thought as well as a flexible attitude toward the result.

The second caution is never underestimate the ability of a bureaucracy to do what it wants while still adhering to the letter of the law. History is full of examples of things that affect this bill. The law says thou shalt do this or thou shalt do that and that is not the way "thou shalt" is doing at all. It is turning out that it is being done differently because, in fact, what is laid down is running contrary to the accepted norms. Lots of ideas were proposed in the hearings. For example, one of the ways to beef up service on the Joint Staff was to make sure that they got a promotion. Others said that if you guarantee a promotion, it is going to be their last promotion. It is like when political appointees go to bat for their military assistants and raise all hell and heaven and earth and the guy gets promoted from 05 to 06 but that is the end, no more promotions after 06.

You can also, as indeed I think Harold Brown tried to do, institute a law that says that joint service was required for promotion to flag or general officer rank. We turned around a year or so later to discover that all kinds of things were designated as joint service. Another proposal was that when you go to get people for the Joint Staff, you insist on choices, not just what the Services send. I have had other people say quietly, "Okay, you say send two choices, and you'll get two choices. The first choice is the one that the Service wants and the second is the choice that nobody wants." In other words, the Services can get around the letter of the law if you are not careful in what you are doing.

What you are always dealing with in the reform business is the business of incentives. And, rather than ordering people to do things, what you have to do in reforms is to reorder the incentives. What are the incentives right now? The incentives in the system right now are in the conflict of time and conflict of interest between the Service and the joint duty. They tilt toward the Service, because the incentives are distinct with the Service. The same is true of the staff. In all of this, the moral of the story is that we have to think of incentives.

As a bottom line, I think, this bill is better than nothing, but it is inadequate in some ways because it does not state explicitly what ought to be stated explicitly. I think, though, it is inadequate in other ways because it has not addressed certain issues, but the debate has addressed those issues. I do not believe we have thought through where we want to go on some of those other issues.

Dr. Jeffrey Barlow: In most ways, I find myself in disagreement with all three speakers though I do share some of John Kester's misgivings about the effects of legislation. Let me go into some specifics, for I think that it is important to talk about some of the detailed aspects of the bill.

First, the legislation would drastically increase the role of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. To begin with, the Chairman would be inserted into the national chain of command. Second, he would provide military advice in his own right to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense. Third, he would become a member of the National Security Council. (At the present time, as you know, the Chairman serves as a spokesman for the Joint Chiefs of Staff in advising the National Security Council.) Next he would determine when the issues before the Joint Chiefs of Staff would be decided. Up to the present, he has acted as an expeditor, but has not forced the Chiefs—has not been able to force the Chiefs—to reach a decision. He would also select the members of the Joint Staff, which he does not now do. And finally, he would submit to the President evaluations with regard to their service in joint military assignments of all officers who were recommended for appointment to grades above two stars.

The second aspect of the bill is that it would make certain changes in the present status of the Joint Staff. First, it would eliminate the restriction on length of tour of duty for the Director of the Joint Staff. At the present time the Director of the Joint Staff serves a maximum of three years during peacetime. Second, it would eliminate the requirement that the Director of the Joint Staff be junior in grade to each member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Third, it would make the Joint Staff responsible for supporting the Chairman in addition to now supporting the Joint Chiefs. It would also extend the maximum permissible length of Joint Staff tour from the present three years, with a reappointment after a three-year absence, to four years, with reappointment after a two-year absence. Fifth, it would allow unified or specified commanders to provide formal comments on Joint Staff reports or recommendations before these have been submitted formally to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. And last, it would encourage the Secretary of Defense to ensure that the Armed Services gave appropriate consideration to performance on the Joint Staff in their

considerations regarding promotion, retention, and assignment.

Those are specifics of the bill, but what does it really accomplish? First, it is my feeling that it would make the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in effect a single Chief of Staff. I think, regarding the point made by Congressman Aspin that the bill should be more clear, it was probably written this way simply because if the bill were made clear, if it were said what we want to do is eliminate the Joint Chiefs as a functional organization and essentially put the Chairman in as a single Chief of Staff, it would not have received congressional support. By using ambiguous language, by writing it so that those who had not studied previous versions of the National Security Act of 1947 would somehow be convinced that it really was not all that different, the framers were attempting to convince the members that it represented just a slight change from the past. Now how would it make the Chairman in fact a single Chief of Staff? He would be in *de facto* command of the operational forces, because of the requirement to supervise the commanders of the combatant commands. This bill would give the Chairman supervisory authority over the CINCs and their commands—a responsibility the Chairman does not now have.

Secondly, he would become the *de facto* principal military advisor to the President and the Secretary of Defense and the National Security Council. First, by virtue of his official sanction to provide military advice in his own right (he does it now as spokesman for the Joint Chiefs), and second, because of his membership on the National Security Council.

Third, he would be in the position to completely control JCS decision making because of his new authority to determine when the issues under consideration would be decided. He already has control in regard to providing the agenda for JCS meetings. So now we have the Chairman deciding not only what is going to be talked about but when the Chiefs have to reach a decision on it. Also, he would have an unanswerable influence over the appointments of senior officers in all Services because of his authority to provide evaluations of all officers regarding their service in joint assignments, once they reach the level of appointment to three stars. Essentially this means the Chairman would have a right to say to the Navy or to the Air Force, "These individuals are up for selection to Lt. General or Vice Admiral. I have evaluated their service in joint commands and my feeling is that they are not qualified for the following reasons." In a sense, the Chairman would be given a reason to meddle in the Service appointments in ways never before possible, which certainly would have far-reaching consequences.

While there are some beneficial aspects of the changes in the bill

regarding the Joint Staff, these are far outweighed by the adverse consequences of those aspects of the bill dealing with the Chairman. To understand this whole question of JCS reform you have to go back to the two basic viewpoints on the Joint Chiefs of Staff; viewpoints that have been held at least since 1945, if not earlier.

On the one hand, there are the so-called purple suiters. The term goes back to the concept that President Eisenhower used very effectively—the idea that at a certain point in an individual's career, he would be taken out of his Service, put in joint assignments, and from then on would have a unified perspective on national security issues. It seems to me that this "purple suiter" idea is a myth. The idea is somehow that an individual can spend the twenty to twenty-five years of his formative working life developing expertise, professional qualifications in a particular Service (more likely in a specific branch of a particular Service—a Naval aviator or submariner, an Army artilleryman or logistician) and then on entering the Joint Staff or the Joint Chiefs of Staff, find that all of these formative influences, these ways of thinking, of training that are so diverse from one Service to another, have suddenly become melded into a unified way of thinking. It is as if an Air Force officer, for example, could command infantry forces in combat equally as well as an Army officer; or a Naval officer who was not an aviator could suddenly understand strategic air power in a way that an Air Force officer could.

This flies in the face of all we know historically about individuals—that over the course of one's career, one builds particular frameworks of thinking, prejudices if you will, which cannot be overcome just because of being transplanted into a different position. So this idea that somehow there can be a unified national military advice that encompasses all of the aspects of national security in a comprehensible way seems to me not only faulty but dangerous. But getting to the other aspect, we have the "purple suiters" on the one hand, and I have to say that both the Army and the Air Force by their own background of training have always advocated this sort of single Chief of Staff approach, while on the other hand the Navy and the Marine Corps have advocated plurality of advice.

I have to say that I tend to favor the Navy position on this after years of study, but it must be understood that, at the level of the Joint Chiefs, the argument is not so much about unity of command as about policy making and the whole idea of providing the President with timely advice. And this involves making sure not only the advice is timely but that it encompasses the wide variety of opinions and perspectives that revolve around the issue, because no issue is single-sided. There are different perspectives, each of which might be correct in certain aspects. And so if there are a va-

riety of individuals, each of whom has risen to the top of his Service, giving advice from his Service perspective, it is much better going into a situation like a war or managing a crisis than if there is a single individual from one Service background suddenly saying "This is the correct approach, and I recommend that we do thus and so."

In a sense, the notion is, if the idea is good, it will stand the test of debate, and this is what the President needs most. Not a speedy decision in issues of policy making but a decision that is well founded, that is well defended in spite of its representing competing viewpoints. It seems to me that the real nature of the JCS is legislative in character. And here I am simply echoing what Samuel Huntington remarked about more than twenty-five years ago in an article entitled "Strategic Planning and the Political Process." He pointed out that a policy making process is legislative in character to the extent that (1) the units participating in the process are relatively equal in power as are the individual Service Chiefs, and consequently must bargain with each other; (2) important disagreements exist concerning the goals of policy, which is also the case because you have differing Service perspectives; and (3) there are many possible alternatives.

It seems to me that essentially the JCS is a legislative body. But the public has never liked to think of the JCS as being legislative in character. As one military officer remarked years ago, "The Congress debates, the Supreme Court deliberates, but the Joint Chiefs simply bicker." The simplistic idea behind this type of categorization is that all these inter-Service rivalries can be reduced basically to fundamental economic issues—that each Service simply wants more of the share of the pie than any other Service. To me, this is a very naive view, and one that does great harm to the professional military. This idea that you can reduce competing viewpoints derived from diverse Service perspectives simply to a matter of a Service Chief asking himself who has the role now, how can my Service take over the role, and how much additional financial support for forces can my Service get for doing so, and therefore, advocating X, Y and Z is just inaccurate. This is not the way it is done. The Chiefs do not base their decisions merely on what they consider to be best for their Service, except in the sense that they base their decisions as Service representatives on the idea (given their training and background) that their perspective is just and that, therefore, they advocate doing thus and so. It seems to me that to understand the issue, and I would like to get more into this in the question period, it must be understood that there are these two competing philosophies: The idea that you can have a unified national decision making body and a single Chief of Staff who somehow

encompass the whole experience of military matters, or on the other hand, that you are better off with a plurality of advice from individuals of equal competence who are forced to thrash out their views among themselves in the JCS forum before submitting a decision to the President.

Lt. General John Pustay: It is hard for me to follow my outline because I disagree with so much of what Jeff has had to say but I will, however, constrain myself and try to hit some of those things as I go through the plan that I have put together. To begin, I will identify myself clearly as one of those in the "purple suit" category.

I believe that putting the Chairman in the chain of command between the Secretary of Defense and the CINCs is a very positive move. Congressman Aspin has already talked about the tremendous load on the Secretary, given his responsibilities. To have no one between him and the CINCs adds even more to that load. It has been my experience that in many cases to simply move an aircraft carrier some thirty to forty miles we had to get explicit Secretary of Defense approval. That was mandated and it was part of the system. I think that the Chairman or the CINC ought to be able to handle that. If there were some special political consequence, obviously the Secretary would have to be involved.

Right now there is no in between. The Secretary does it all and I think that is a disservice to him and encumbers him much more than is necessary. Putting the Chairman of the JCS in the chain of command also provides an opportunity for the Chairman to provide the Secretary with advice on major matters of military deployments and employments. It could be said, "Well, he doesn't have to do that. The Secretary of Defense will do it by himself." But the Secretary does not do it by himself, he does it with a cadre of civilians with, in many cases, far less experience. Therefore, I think that overall this is a positive part of the bill.

When it comes to making the Chairman a *de jure* member of the NSC, I take the point of John Kester. I am not as strongly in favor of that, given some of the potential problems that have been illuminated by others, especially those related to the possible politicization of the position of Chairman. Obviously I would be unalterably opposed to that. I would like to insure though that somehow through a prescription of law the Chairman would have the opportunity of providing military advice to the President, even if it were not in agreement with advice offered by the Secretary of Defense. I would like to see that opportunity available by making him a formal member of the NSC or by some other means.

It is absolutely essential that the Chairman be able to provide military advice in his own right. I sat through many NSC meetings where the

Chairman had to stand up and say, "This is the advice of my colleagues—the JCS collectively." And also having been privy to the discussions and the debates that went on via the so-called "legislative process" that Jeff refers to, I am not sure that this process always generates the best military advice. I think that most Chairmen will take the opportunity of saying, if they feel strongly about something, "Let me offer my own professional opinion on this." But in many cases they are reluctant to do that because they feel they have a special obligation to present the collective view. They will consider themselves as the spokesmen of that corporate body and there is therefore an inhibition that is a function of what is actually offered in the way of advice to the NSC.

As far as the Joint Staff supporting the Chairman, I think that is absolutely essential. It is almost unconscionable that the Chairman does not have control over a staff which would help him develop positions, help him analyze options developed by the Services, and thereby permit him to provide better or higher quality military advice to civilian authorities. The way this "system" operates at present, the "drivers" in what will ultimately become the Joint Staff's input to the Chairman will be Service action officers, who are charged with putting together positions reflecting their Service's point of view. These points of view will then be amalgamated—via the process of lowest common denominator compromises—under the rubric of the Joint Staff and provided on a platter to the Chairman for articulation as the JCS position on a particular issue. We do not provide our civilian authorities with the best military advice using this particular system.

The individual Chiefs (and the CINCs), under this bill, would have the opportunity of commenting or appending to any JCS paper their particular views. I consider this to be a very good provision. It will ensure that all issues can be fully aired.

The Secretary of Defense and the JCS are supposed to insure that the Services give appropriate consideration to the record of performance of officers assigned to the Joint Staff. Here again I would return to Congressman Aspin's point on how bureaucracies tend to work around prescriptions or proscriptions with which they disagree. For example, I once asked the question, "What is the JCS definition of "joint duty?" All Services had a different definition, and there was not a uniformly accepted definition of joint service. Yet there is a longstanding directive by the Secretary of Defense that each Service in promoting officers to Brigadier General or Commodore promote only those who had previously served in a joint assignment. It is clear that that directive was compromised by the various definitions of what constituted joint assignment. There were many officers who were promoted to the rank of general or

commodore without benefit of previous *de facto* joint assignment.

No one is suggesting that to be "purple" you have to acquire an unreal "interchangability quality," such that a B-52 pilot could go out and command a battalion. That is the sort of extreme argument which serves no particular purpose. But there are many people with particular mindsets, who are not given the opportunity in most cases to have those mindsets changed.

I think it is essential that an officer come to the Joint Staff with credentials as a submariner or a battalion commander or a squadron commander, and that he bring those particular experiences and that expertise to bear on the solution of problems he is addressing. But, as he progresses from Lieutenant or Ensign, a maturation process takes place through the professional military education system, through greater service interchange of officers, which permits him to have a much larger perspective. He should not have to go into a situation assuming that it is his Service, and only his Service, that can solve a particular problem.

In the Vietnam war, for example, a case can be made that we had six or seven wars going on simultaneously: the air war being conducted up north by the Navy using carrier aircraft; the air war being conducted up north by tactical air assets under the 7th Air Force; the air war being conducted up north by the Strategic Air Command; the air war being conducted down south in support of the Army by the USAF tactical forces under the 7th Air Force; and then there was RVN air war. Finally on top of that, there was the "chopper war," the rotary wing war that was being conducted by the U.S. Army in support of ground forces.

We experienced many problems attempting to find a solution to effective air space management for the combat zones. That problem went to the JCS for resolution time and time again. Has the JCS solved the air space management problems as a doctrinal matter for the joint prosecution of war in the post-Vietnam period? The answer is no. We are led to believe that, under the pressures of war, the commanders on the scene will be able to work out the complex problems of air space management. I do not think that will necessarily happen without our sustaining unnecessary costs. I do not think we will have the resources in the future to permit the luxury of conducting several air wars by different services without the benefit of a joint doctrine on air space management to be followed by all.

I think the provision that the Chairman should evaluate all three-star and above officers is a good one, and I think that he should make that evaluation based on how well these officers have performed in joint positions and how well they reflect the broad inter-service perspective, which is essential for all senior military leaders.

It was suggested earlier that we have to view this whole problem in

essentially two major dimensions: one is the provision of the best possible military advice to civilian authorities. The second is how best to structure the force and invest our resources to equip this force. The bill we are discussing will address the first problem more completely than it addresses the second. One of my basic reservations is that, if we go ahead and pass this particular bill, I am afraid we will be walking away from the larger problem. This particularly concerns me because I do not think the current opportunity will recur and permit us to finish the job.

I probably have done more in the diagnostic part of this analysis than I have in the therapeutic, but I must admit, and again I agree with Congressman Aspin, that a lot more work has to be done, a lot more thought has to be given to the appropriate prescription for constructive change in the entire JCS system. I do not think this particular bill does the job.

Col. Crackel: Before we open the floor for questions from the audience, I believe we should give the panel an opportunity to raise issues of their own particular interest.

Mr. Steadman: I would like to make several points. In my brief analysis of the bill I did not mention those things to which I object, or which I think are left out. Let me do so now in very summary fashion. First, it is a grave mistake to have the Chairman be a member of the NSC—essentially for the reasons that have already been cited. Second, I think it is a grave mistake for the bill to detail how orders are to be transmitted, which it does by saying that the orders to combatant commanders shall be issued by the President or the Secretary through the Chairman. This is in addition to the fact that the Chairman would be put in the chain by the earlier language. I could not imagine how that got there until I read the Administration draft, and there it was. That's got to go. You cannot tell the senior commander how he must issue his orders.

Third, the bill omits having a deputy. A Deputy Chairman is necessary to provide continuity in dealings with the Secretary, the other Chiefs, and the rest of the national security establishment in the absence of the Chairman. Fourth, I believe that the bill ought to make clear that it is not designating the Chairman as the supreme military commander of all the forces. I do not believe it intends that. It should make clear that it does not.

And finally, and most centrally, I believe that the most important thing that the bill works its way toward doing, in some direct ways and in some subtle ways, is to enhance very substantially the potential role of the Joint

Staff. It enhances it to be what amounts to a genuine national military staff to address and act as the staff that puts together the recommendations that go up to the Chiefs, doing it in consultation rather than coordination with Service staffs, and doing it as the author and not as the coordinator. In that regard, I think that it ought to be clarified that the staff is under the direction of the Chairman, that it is the Chairman's staff.

Each of the Service Chiefs has his own Service staff to support him in his role as a member of the Joint Chiefs. It is made up of the best officers that he can find in his Service. They are the best staffs in the Services. And the Chairman requires such a staff under his direction both in order to perform his functions as an advisor in his own right and, of equal importance, to have a staff that does the work which is then addressed by the Joint Chiefs as a corporate body.

On this question of "purple" or other suiting, I would say that nobody who has had twenty years as a naval officer in some specialized command ever can forget or ignore that training. But we are talking about officers at the Lieutenant Colonel or Colonel level, about people who have had twenty years experience and are, moreover, highly educated or very intelligent. My experience is that, when they are put into jobs where their responsibilities are clear in some way other than directly to their Service, whether it's in the White House or in the State Department or in ISA or systems analysis, that they respond to the responsibility, not to the uniform that they wear. I am confident we could have an effective Joint Staff operating as a national military staff even though they were serving members of individual Services and would go back to individual Services if the work that that staff was producing was deemed to be relevant and important in the national security decision making process and if it was under the direction of a clear "purple suiter"—i.e., the Chairman and not as today, the corporate Joint Chiefs.

Finally, I would repeat that, from the perspective of the Secretary and the Congress, there is now no military institution from which they can seek useful advice on the most important issues that they face: the allocation of money, the structure of the force, the definition of the roles and missions, the structuring of the commands. It does not exist. And it does not exist because the military chooses not to have it exist. The individual Services prefer to take their chances on fragmented advice provided through Service channels. And that is perfectly natural; it is perfectly understandable. It also is harmful to the country that there is no source of national uniformed military advice on an institutional basis. The only way we are ever going to get it is through a strengthened Joint Staff.

Rep. Aspin: Let me just make a counterargument and see what John Kester would say. If something is delegated to the Chairman of the JCS, that means that it is going to be reactive. He is only going to convey and deal with the CINCs in the areas in which the Secretary has delegated. If you make the CINCs report to the Chairman, the Chairman is in the position to initiate some things and go out to the CINCs and gather some information and initiate some ideas within the building and go to the Secretary of Defense and say, "Look, here's a problem we ought to do something about." In other words, you don't wait for the Secretary to decide that there's a problem and delegate to the Chairman to do something about it, you let the Chairman order stuff up from the CINCs and go to the Secretary.

Mr. Kester: I cannot imagine that there is any real inhibition right now on the Chairman talking, collecting information, having a dialogue with the CINCs. That has to go on.

Rep. Aspin: A dialogue, yes. But if you are really running the show, there's a difference between running it and conveying it.

Mr. Kester: I agree with that, and the other aspect of it is that, if you put the Chairman in the chain of command, then you say to the CINCs "from now on you work for the Chairman." I thought a really striking example of it came up a couple of weeks ago when in a conversation at that earlier conference, General Dick Stilwell was talking about the advantages of putting the Chairman in the chain of command—and he said, "And of course, by the way, the quarterly reports of the CINCs would no longer go to the Secretary of Defense, they would go to the Chairman." Well, I was there when the quarterly reporting system was instituted. It was instituted by Harold Brown because he wondered what was going on down there with the CINCs, and he wanted to remind them that the Secretary was concerned in hearing from them. He didn't want to hear it filtered through the JCS, which is what it tends to be anyhow. And I think you would really be building a wall and submerging the CINCs further down in the organization when they probably should be raised higher. But I will let John respond to that.

Gen. Pustay: First of all I think a very good argument can be made that putting the Chairman in the chain of command does make for a far more efficient organization. The notion that maybe the Chairman will go out to the CINCs on any particular occasion to gather data or to get positions is

not exactly accurate. Because of the present structure, he normally waits for a lead from the Secretary of Defense. As a consequence, over the past six years the "11:30 Meeting" has been established. In that meeting the Secretary of Defense, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the Chairman and the Assistant to the Chairman get together. The Chairman then has an opportunity to give a broad view of a particular situation and to provide some military advice. This procedure has evolved to a point where the Chairman asks the Secretary for authority to take actions which one would think automatically would be in his purview and responsibility.

Putting the Chairman in the chain of command would streamline the process and still permit the Chairman to obtain policy guidance when it is required. I do not think this is going to happen simply by delegation. There always will be someone worried that the delegated authority does not apply to this or that particular situation. I think it's incredible that we burden the Secretary with so much micro-management in the employment and deployment of forces. I think the Chairman could carry out that responsibility for him and under his supervision.

On the second point, there is a clear need for a Deputy Chairman. When the Chairman is traveling and the NSC is convened, it is simply unfair to ask the Acting Chairman, who is a Service Chief, to go to the White House and provide military advice on problems which have been developing over a period of time. He perhaps will have some currency in the subject before the Council, but he will not have the benefit of discussions at previous meetings on the same subject. A Deputy Chairman, who attends NSC meetings with the Chairman, can more effectively serve in the "pinch-hitter" role. I think we have a rather serious flaw in the existing system, and that having a Deputy Chairman at the four-star level would take care of that.

Dr. Barlow: I would just like to make a couple of comments going back to the points that John Pustay made, which I think were seconded by Richard Steadman, because it is very important to understand this "purple suit" versus plurality dichotomy. I simply do not believe that individuals training in a particular Service for twenty years, suddenly develop, on reaching the 0-5 and 0-6 level and above, the experience outside the narrow confines of their Service that enables them to understand grand strategy or military strategy in the way that is necessary in order to be a single Chief of Staff or a very strong Chairman.

What we have seen over the last twenty to twenty-five years, in fact, is that individuals have become even less competent in terms of command experience than they were in the 1950s and certainly during the 1920s

and 1930s. That is, there are far more individuals now competing for a smaller number of command slots relative to the total number in the force. We know that, since the McNamara period, people have been advised for career purposes, that in order to reach the O-6 level and above, they should take time out for advanced education, master's degrees and Ph.D.s in international relations, business management, and the like.

We know that, in part because of the requirements for joint staff experience, once an officer reaches the level of O-4, it is often the last time he really has a chance to involve himself completely in his own branch before being pulled out into this larger framework. As a result, individuals at the present time are often very capable in a joint sense—in the sense of being military diplomats working with other Services—but they are far less capable in the terms of being operationally experienced. In the 1920s and 1930s, for example, by the time an officer in the Navy had reached Lieutenant Commander or Commander he had had multiple command assignments. At this stage, many officers actually have fifteen years in service before assuming their first ship commands, and there are so few ships to command that an individual is lucky to have a single command of that type before moving on.

This means that once you stop looking at the administrative aspect of the Chiefs' job and start looking into the operational command or supervision aspects, where the Chiefs are expected to give professional military advice during times of crisis, you actually have members of the JCS who are not fully qualified in their own Service making judgments from the grand strategic or operational-level perspective.

I once asked Curtis LeMay, who in the Kennedy years was Chief of Staff of the Air Force, what his reaction was to various Chiefs of Staff with whom he had served. He spoke about General Earl Wheeler, who had been Chief of Staff of the Army and later Chairman of the Joint Chiefs (during the whole Vietnam period), "Well Bus Wheeler was a nice enough guy. But I didn't feel that he had any experience to speak of. I couldn't trust his judgment. What did he have—command of a division for a couple of months?" This is my point. Earl Wheeler had been Director of the Joint Staff. He had been selected by McNamara to take over the Chief of Staff slot in the Army largely because he got along very well with the McNamara team, not because he was particularly experienced as a senior officer in the Army. He had had command of an armored division in the States for about eighteen months. He had been sent over to Europe as the Deputy CINCEUR in a sense to season him to take the Chief of Staff job. I asked General Decker, his predecessor as Chief of Staff, about him. He said, "Well, he was a good man. I think he would

have done a very good job, but I wished he had had a little more seasoning." Admiral Elmo Zumwalt is a similar case. He rose to senior rank in part because of his role as an aide to Paul Nitze, first when Nitze was Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, and then when he became Secretary of the Navy, going from Captain to Rear Admiral without a major ship command and going all the way to Chief of Naval Operations without a major Fleet command at the three-star level. The private reaction of both Admiral Moorer and Admiral Burke to this was that Zumwalt was a fine guy but that he should have had more seasoning before assuming this top position.

The point I am making is not that an individual of the Joint Chiefs level is expected to manage a battalion or know how to operate a squadron in the sense that he is simply going to micromanage; they do not do that. But they should be expected to be competent to deal with the operational-tactical level and the grand strategic level. You can often expect that of individual Chiefs when dealing from their Service perspectives, but you cannot expect this of a single individual who, as a strong Chairman or a single Chief of Staff, is expected to grasp all of the ramifications of the various tactical and operational employments of the various Services.

Gen. Pustay: A quick rejoinder. First of all, I think it is a mistake to draw a simple dichotomy. I do not want to use names where one person represents one model and the other gentleman you refer to could be suggested to represent the opposite model. I think what is needed clearly is people who are well grounded in both areas. And that is why I indicated that one of the solutions to the problem is to start within the professional military education system very early in the education and training of all officers. At the Service Academy level, the Command and Staff College level, and the War College level, we should have the curriculum divided up into something which is half devoted to the sponsoring Service so an officer can polish his skills and become knowledgeable in his particular military discipline. The other half of the curriculum ought to be devoted to something related to joint service studies, which begin to broaden an officer's perspective to include combined arms operations and support. I think we need both. And what we are not getting right now are enough people with that broader joint perspective, the so-called "purple perspective." I think the existing educational system virtually precludes an officer's getting that type of perspective even when the institutions are under the aegis of the JCS. In observing the JCS at work, it is clear that each Chief comes to the "tank" representing his Service; he is the ambassador of his particular Service to that particular forum.

Let me cite a vignette on how a Chief is often briefed in preparation for a JCS meeting. His action officers will come in and indicate an issue on the agenda: "The Army is going to take this position; the Navy is going to take this position. Sir, we want to win this one. This is our position: A, B, C, and D. Okay." Then they cheer him on and say, in effect, "Go get 'em Chief!" He comes back after the end of the meeting and the same action officers are there waiting for the debrief. The door opens, "How did we do, Sir?" And the "we" there is very service specific. I do not want to say that the Chiefs are always driven by that consideration. They are not always parochial. But being human, they have got to be responsive to the demands of the leadership role they serve in their respective Services. As a consequence, they cannot always take a broader perspective to the tank, although I know of some times when that did happen. For example, on the surface launched cruise missile, a particular Chief subordinated his Service's desires for the system for over a year because we were working on a specific NATO problem at that particular time. The present system does work sometimes. But, in my judgment, this is the exception rather than the rule.

Mr. Kester: I would like to respond to Les Aspin's first question, which John has already started to do. The question is, if we make the staff of the Joint Chiefs of Staff really prestigious, are people going to flock to it? And my answer is, absolutely not. And one of the central problems is this: we can talk a lot about how we deal with the four or five top people, but if we don't do something about the Joint Staff—which is where people's careers are involved, and is what matters—then we haven't done anything at all.

I do not think that the House bill adequately addresses this whole business with its legislation about efficiency reports and recommendations and who signs what. This will have no effect at all except to produce routine paperwork. I do have sort of a blunt instrument solution, which I would suggest for this if you want to legislate on the subject at all: say that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense convene a promotion board for 10 percent (or pick a number) of the promotions to 0-6 [Captain/Colonel] and 07 and 08 [Brigadier General/Commodore and Major General/Rear Admiral], and let those promotions come up through a joint system so it is not just the next promotion but the one after that and the one after that. And the individual can see those coming. This would have an effect. It would say to a really hot officer, "Look, you can make a decent career for yourself through the joint system, and you will not be dependent on having to go back to your

Service and be punished if you don't do what the Service wants in the Joint Staff." That's the problem, in joint recommendations right now, as Dick Steadman outlined perfectly. No positions are now taken on dividing the budget or on roles and missions and structuring the forces, but if you did what I suggest, perhaps they would be.

Col. Crackel: John [Kester], you have published more recently than anyone here on this topic, specifically an article that appeared a few weeks ago in the *New York Times*. It was a commentary that bears on the second question that Congressman Aspin asked.

You said, "We are not yet ruled by a soldier on horseback. Perhaps we never shall be. But we are starting to buy the horse." A year ago, when you were testifying before the House, you spoke to this same issue. You said, "The larger answer to such concerns about civilian control is that the United States has no tradition of military dominance and is not remotely in any such danger today." I realize that that was a year earlier. Have we moved in that direction in the last year?

Mr. Kester: No, and in fact my position is absolutely consistent over time. [Laughter] The quote you have from my House testimony had to do with the Jones and Meyer proposals, which I then supported and still do support. I do not think that they create a problem. If you continue to read further into my House testimony, however, you will see that I said there was one thing I did not like and thought was a bad idea in Meyer's proposal, and that was to put the Chairman in the chain of command.

The reasons are not that I see any real problem in the foreseeable future. But in this area, if by law, a single military officer is set up with so much power not in some ways derivative from the Secretary of Defense, not easily watchable in some respects, then there is a chance for creating danger. I am not worried about ten years from now, I am worried about forty years from now. My simple response, therefore, is, why should we move in that direction when that is not the problem? The problem in making the Joint Chiefs of Staff work is something else. And I'm all for a stronger Chairman, but for a stronger Chairman still clearly subordinate to the Secretary of Defense, as he is now.

Col. Crackel: Congressman Aspin, you suggested that one of the purposes here was to unfetter a strong Chairman should he be inclined to take command. Was that the purpose of the wording of this bill?

Rep. Aspin: I think that is what we tried to do in this bill. And I think it is about twenty-five years too late. If we had done that in 1958, there would

have been the possibility of a strong Chairman coming in and both making and taking advantage of the opportunities that the law allows in a way similar to the way that McNamara came in during 1961 and took advantage of the latitude that the 1958 law gave him. But now we have had twenty-five more years of doing business. And remember that a Chairman of the Joint Chiefs doesn't come in cold the way McNamara came into a Pentagon. Here is a guy who has grown up through that system and has had to get along with all these people. It is very hard to imagine that if you just change the law and the nuance the way that this bill does, you are going to get a "hard charger" that's going to grab the powers in the bill which I think are there. I just don't believe it's going to happen. I think the bill has to be more explicit if you're going to make the changes now.

Col. Crackel: Now for questions from the floor.

Guest: Wouldn't a prestigious Joint Staff create rivalries with the National Security Council and State Department staffs?

Rep. Aspin: I do not think so because as I read the bill now, one of the attributes of the ambiguity, the use of the term "manager" or "supervisor" or whatever, indicates that the Secretary of Defense is clearly the boss and has overall responsibility and overall directive authority. So I just do not see that a competition is being built between them.

Guest: I am concerned by how quickly the panel seemed to back away from the House efforts to ensure the Chairman a larger role in an NSC discussion. That seems to be what the House did, and it just got thrown into the wastebasket [by the panel] as soon as somebody objected. It was my understanding that for the first four weeks of the Carter Administration, the NSC subgroups—the working level—were structured without a uniformed professional military voice at all. It took a great deal of persuasion to subsequently give the Chairman a representative in the various subgroups so that a professional uniformed military voice could be heard. I had the impression that what the House was doing was to ensure that this did not happen again. The concern about a hypothetical politicalization is simply not nearly so important as the concern about not having a uniformed military voice in on the highest national security decisions.

And a second thing, John Kester's concern should not be that a structured, more important, more prestigious Chairman is going to take something away from the Secretary of Defense. That is no more likely

than that a good brigade commander will take anything away from the division commander. What you really are concerned about is that this will take power away from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and I think is precisely what this bill would do.

Mr. Kester: I do not disagree with the idea that a good brigade commander is something any division commander would want. But my point is a simple one. I would like to have a stronger Chairman, who is able to exercise more authority by running the Joint Staff, having an effective Joint Staff, not having everything vetoed by the interests of the Army or the Navy or the Air Force. I do not want to have a Chairman who is a separate entity outside the Department in his own right. I am all for enhancing the Chairman in sensible ways. There are many ways to do that, and it definitely needs to be done.

Guest: Can we learn anything in this area from the other Western democracies?

Rep. Aspin: Generally speaking, all of them are moving toward more centralization and more "purple suiting." Several of us here recently attended a conference with the Canadians, British, Germans, and Israelis where their systems and that of the Soviets were considered, and in sum, the trend generally is toward centralization.

Mr. Kester: And if there is a single Service which is clearly dominant, there is even a greater tendency toward centralization.

Rep. Aspin: And the Navy, kicking and screaming and resisting every case.

Guest: Is there any provision for the rotation, among the Services, of the more powerful Chairman's job? If not, is this likely to increase interservice rivalries?

Col. Crackel: There is currently no provision by law for such rotation. It has been done by custom, though not necessarily in order.

Rep. Aspin: I'll bet you anything that the next Chairman is going to be an Admiral. It's time for the Navy again.

Mr. Kester: One way to moderate that problem is to have a Deputy Chairman. And I think, in fact, the 1982 House bill did provide that, if

the Chairman were from the Army or Air Force, the Vice (or Deputy) Chairman should be from the Navy or Marine Corps or vice versa. So you could moderate it that way. I personally would hate to see any President or Secretary of Defense restricted in the choice of Chairman because at that level it seems to me the decisive consideration should be the individual. I also think that most of the individuals that go into that job actually acquire a perspective that is broader than the Service they came up with. Obviously they don't forget their history, but it does something to broaden them.

Mr. Steadman: The law as it now exists says that the Joint Staff will be approximately equally divided between the Services. The Services go further than that. They keep very careful track of how the senior slots are divided and they always know when a slot comes open which Service is going to provide the nominee for that slot. And these changes would not necessarily change that, but what they would change is that, rather than just accepting whomever the Service decided to nominate for that job, the Chairman could ask for two, three, or four nominations and he could make his own choice. The law as it now exists says that the Chairman will pick the Director of the Joint Staff.

It does not happen that way. When it is the Army's time for the Joint Staff, the Army makes a single nomination for the Director, and he is the Director unless the Chairman has some violent personal objection to the individual. And it is the same with the other Services. The House bill would change dramatically the potential composition of the Joint Staff, not in terms of a different spread between the Services, but in giving the Chairman, first, the right to insist that only the most highly qualified officers be submitted as nominees, and second, the right to require that multiple submissions be made. Those two things in combination would be powerful steps toward enhancing the calibre of the Joint Staff.

Dr. Barlow: I think one point might be made in connection with the Director of the Joint Staff. Currently, the Director serves a maximum term of three years, which means that the Chairman may be able to pick a particular individual but he cannot keep him on indefinitely. Under the new House bill, the three-year limit is dropped so that the Director can serve as long as the Chairman feels is necessary. I think that is an important difference.

Mr. Kester: Let me take up the point on interservice rivalry. There is considerable asset value that you can ascribe to that. But I would also suggest at this time, even with the large budgets that we have, there is

very tough competition for funds, and what happens with a weak Joint Staff and a weak Chairman is that the interservice rivalry is translated into an arithmetic summation of what each Service wants. There is no scrutinizing, there is no prioritization, there is no honest look at overlap in mission, overlap in weapons systems being procured, unless that type of scrutiny takes place in the Defense Resources Board and an Assistant Secretary or a Service Secretary or the Secretary of Defense does it for them. But I think that the system would be much strengthened if professional military advice could be inserted into that process, advice given by a stronger Chairman supported by a stronger Joint Staff, which would provide options and risk analyses and suggest prioritization to the Secretary of Defense so that his decisions could be informed by enlightened input.

We are going to have to come to this, because weapons systems are getting so expensive, and the numbers crunch is so tough. In the absence of that, there is a sort of a serendipitous selection of what is procured and then assigned to the CINCs. For that reason, I would like to go back to an earlier point. I think we must not forget to focus also on strengthening the role of the CINCs, both in determining requirements and in providing them the staff to be able to develop and articulate those requirements to the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman.

Col. Crackel: The changes we are talking about today make up only a portion of the kinds of changes that you are suggesting. There are, in addition to these structural changes, process changes and adjustments that also need to be made.

Guest: Is there a proposal for investigating what kind of career pattern or career program would draw people into this Joint Staff and thereby provide quality advice?

Rep. Aspin: There are three things in the bill that, in combination, are important. The first is implicit and probably the most important of all. That is, if the Joint Staff is producing work which is considered to be relevant and important to the uniformed military and the national security decision making process, it then becomes a magnet for qualified people. The second thing is that the bill includes the provision for the Chairman to be able to require that only the "most highly qualified officers" be nominated for members of the staff, and that there be multiple submissions. And the third mandate is for the Secretary of Defense to ensure that the promotion boards of the individual Services

incorporate service on the Joint Staff into their considerations. Taken as a package that is a good start for getting people to think about service on the Joint Staff. As it now stands, service on the Joint Staff is a disincentive.

Guest: It is hard to imagine anything competing with the draw of the Services' General Staffs as a means of career advancement.

Col. Crackel: There have been proposals made for various kinds of joint-general staff structures in which one could be promoted and could spend the balance of his career. Maybe entering it at the fifteenth or twentieth year of service after having demonstrated competence in the joint arena and then progressing in a similar manner as in the regular Services. Such proposals have been made but are not getting the serious consideration that the comments of several of the panel members imply they should.

Rep. Aspin: There are two areas that we have not thought through clearly: the question about the Joint Staff and the thing about the CINCs. Our talk has very heavily focused on the reorganization of the role of the Chairman, JCS, on the dual-hatting problems. Not enough thought has been given to ways to improve the quality of people who are going to the Joint Staff. People say they get good people on it, but the best people know that the way to get to be Chief of Staff of the Air Force is to command Air Force units.

Mr. Kester: And it varies by Service. Sometimes they actually make a special effort to ensure that the Joint Staff gets, at least, a reasonably good share of its talent. Others go to the opposite extreme.

Mr. Steadman: I recommended [in my report] that the Chairman be given the authority to ask for assignment to the Joint Staff of any member of the Armed Services that he wants to have. This is not to imply that the Chairman knows who he wants to ask for. He does not in most cases. But the good Air Force officers know who the other top Air Force officers are. And that is how they now end up on the Air staff. And by the same token if the Chairman had that kind of drawing authority, the top people would end up on the Joint Staff. The better the staff (these things are sort of self-fulfilling prophesies, like chasing tails), the better the work produced, the more authority it has, the more people want to be on it. I would like to see that kind of authority given, but it does not have to be done legislatively. The Secretary could do it, but no Secretary is willing to upset the Services

in the way that kind of edict would. Even Harold Brown, who now wants a stronger Joint Staff, would never go for making that single, very simple, but very important, directive.

Mr. Kester: I agree with Dick Steadman. I think that promotions and assignments are the key and, of course, assignments tend to determine promotions over the long run. It is not a good idea to legislate a lot of details in this matter, but if you wanted to legislate, it should be something along the order of what I have mentioned: give some promotions to the Chairman and say that he can grab anybody he wants within certain restrictions or numbers. The advantage of putting that into legislation might be the following. The smart officers to whom you were referring a while ago can't seem to get their minds adjusted to this. One of the reasons smart officers cannot get their minds adjusted to joint duty is because they are smart officers. They know that people can get very enthusiastic about things, and then after two or three years the enthusiasm wanes, and it goes back to whether you commanded a battalion or a ship at the right time.

Years ago, the Army tried to encourage good people to be advisers to the Vietnamese and said advisory duty would count as if it were command duty for purposes of promotion. A lot of officers kept expressing skepticism about that. "Why are you so skeptical?" I asked, "They said it's going to count as command duty." And they replied, "Well that's what they say now. Wait until five years from now." I was wrong, they were right. After five years they said, "Oh he was one of those who tried to get it that way." So one advantage of putting it in legislation would be that it could not be changed with a new administration or a turnover. And I think that would be a good idea.

Gen. Pustay: I am not sure that the current bill will actually give the Chairman the amount of specific authority that he needs to control at least a certain number of promotions. That bothers me a bit. In the way of a summary on this whole issue of joint service, I think that there are two essential matters on which most of us around this table agree. One is some sort of control of promotions by the Chairman for people serving on the Joint Staff. Second, the notion of a major change in the professional military education system. Even though some Services now claim they do more in the area of joint studies, I think we ought to take a hard look, starting at the pre-baccalaureate level in the ROTC programs and in the Service Academies (which are the citadels of these Services) and then go from there to the Command Staff Schools and to the War Colleges and

ensure that an appreciation of the joint perspective is reflected in at least half of the curricula of all these institutions. We need an approach from the bottom up as well as the top down, if we are to make joint service a way of professional life for the military establishment.

Col. Crackel: Our time has expired, so I want to thank the panel for an enlightening and a lively debate. My thanks also to the audience for their interest and enthusiasm.

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The Heritage Lectures

The so-called Military Reform movement long has called for Pentagon reorganization. One controversial proposal is designed to reshape the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Pending legislation would strengthen greatly the role of the Joint Chiefs' Chairman and would remove certain tenure restrictions and size limitations on the Joint Staff.

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