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**UNIFIED COMMAND IN A
UNIPOLAR WORLD**

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FEB 07 1992

LTC Phillip E. Oates, US Army
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Nine recommendations for the UCP are proposed.

- (1) **Establish five unified commands** (Strategic, Atlantic, Pacific, Americas, and Combat Support)
- (2) **Give Strategic Command the space war fighting missions.**
- (3) **Give Combat Support Command responsibility for transportation, space-based support systems, and joint logistics.**
- (4) **Make Special Operations Command, Forces Command, Tactical Air Command and North American Defense Command sub-unified commands within Americans Command.**
- (5) **Rotate command of Atlantic Command, Pacific Command, Americas Command, and Combat Support Command between all services.**
- (6) **Rotate command of Strategic Command between the Air Force and Navy.**
- (7) **Change the term "unified command." Designate Atlantic, Pacific, Americas, and Strategic Commands as unified combatant commands. Designate Combat Support Command as a unified supporting command.**
- (8) **Eliminate the term "specified command."**
- (9) **Declassify the Unified Command Plan.**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our paper reviews defense legislation and the Unified Command Plan (UCP) to determine if current provisions for national defense remain appropriate for a new world order. A principal assumption is that of a multi-dimensional and interrelated yet unipolar world. The US remains the only nation capable of projecting global power in all three vital national security areas: the economic, the political, and the military.

We determine current legislation provides an appropriate national defense structure for the United States for the foreseeable future. A strong institution of national defense has evolved. Effective civilian control through the President, Secretary of Defense, and Congress provides appropriate balance to the increased power and authority of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the combatant commanders-in chief. Less autonomous, yet still separate services compete for resources, systems, doctrine, roles, and missions, thus contributing to the reduction in resource duplication. Unification of the Defense Department is better now than ever as a result of the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act. Our global perspective is still appropriate. However, we did identify some provisions of legislation for additional review: roles and

functions of the services, joint personnel policies, the War Powers Act, and the need for service secretaries. Those topics were beyond the scope of this paper; we recommend them for additional study.

The second portion of our paper addresses the UCP. We argue that the reduced chance of a world war presents the first real opportunity in nearly forty-five years to consider a major change in the combatant command structure. Fewer geographic unified commands covering larger areas offer many advantages. This change reduces the span of control of the Secretary of Defense. It increases the authority of the remaining CINCs, thus balancing the greater authority of the Chairman. It improves unification by eliminating the existing single service orientation of some commands. It reduces potential boundary disputes between the geographic commands and the Department of State. It encourages the combatant CINC to focus on his most essential tasks of advising the National Command Authority, marshalling resources, and shaping the strategy, the theater, and the forces. It encourages the greater use of sub-unified commands to maintain appropriate attention to war-fighting and rapid deployment. This allows the unified command to become more of a supporting command in the early stages of regional conflicts, both low- and mid-intensity.

We submit nine recommendations for the UCP.

- (1) **Establish five unified commands.** (Strategic, Atlantic, Pacific, Americas, and Combat Support)
- (2) **Give Strategic Command the space war-fighting missions.**

- (3) Give Combat Support Command responsibility for transportation, space-based support systems, and joint logistics.
- (4) Make Special Operations Command, Forces Command, Tactical Air Command and North American Defense Command sub-unified commands within Americas Command.
- (5) Rotate command of Atlantic Command, Pacific Command, Americas Command, and Combat Support Command between all services.
- (6) Rotate command of Strategic Command between the Air Force and Navy.
- (7) Change the term "unified command." Designate Atlantic, Pacific, Americas, and Strategic Commands as unified combatant commands. Designate Combat Support Command as a unified supporting command.
- (8) Eliminate the term "specified command."
- (9) Declassify the Unified Command Plan.

CHAPTER 1 -- INTRODUCTION

This paper reviews the National Defense Act, as amended, and the Unified Command Plan (UCP) to determine if current defense legislation, founded in 1947, is appropriate in the post-cold war environment. Many questions require answers. Have we fixed the lack of service unification that has existed throughout our history? Is service rivalry a problem? Do we still need a global military capability and presence? Has the threat changed sufficiently to permit a reduction in the number of unified commands? Is the UCP appropriate for a "base force" of a smaller active component and fewer forward deployed forces?¹

Will a unified commander lose the focus on war-fighting if the geographic area of his command is expanded considerably? Can we build a unified structure more capable of accomplishing peacetime, contingency, and war-fighting missions?

The National Defense Act of 1947 has been the foundation for the military structure of the United States for nearly forty-five years. Now, the world is experiencing its greatest changes since World War II. At this important juncture in history, it is important to consider whether that legislation, as amended, is still appropriate for our national defense. **If the Defense Act**

were rewritten today, would it resemble the initial version? Or have the changes in the world rendered it obsolete?

A new world order is emerging. The Soviet Union has lost considerable ideological and political influence, remaining a global power only in the areas of selected military capabilities (such as strategic nuclear weapons and submarine forces), space technology, and certain areas of scientific research. Germany and Japan have become world powers economically and politically. Large powerful common markets are forming in Europe and the Americas. Instead of national economies, we see an emerging world economy. Nations are becoming interdependent states for goods, services, resources, and technology. New and fragile democracies are emerging around the globe. And yet the proliferation of sophisticated conventional and nuclear weapons continues.

There are many dimensions to our world today. The bipolar world, dominated by competition between the United States and the Soviet Union, no longer exists. But, Professor Joseph Nye of Harvard feels that these multi-dimensional dynamics have not yet created a multipolar world. In his book, Bound to Lead, he argues that we now have a unipolar world. The US is the only country with global power in all three vital and interrelated areas: the economic, the political, and the military. This paper accepts the premise of unipolarity, a world where the United States has global interests and global responsibilities.

The changes in the world have led to pressure for the US to reduce defense spending. This pressure is understandable. Our

military capability grew significantly during the past ten years. Despite the economic and social costs, the expansion was justifiable: we were in the midst of a cold war, the Soviets were building a huge military force, and the US had permitted its defense capability to erode. Increased defense spending, sound political leadership, and a professional military helped end the cold war. Now, our political leaders are beginning to push the resource pendulum back toward economic and social needs. Public opinion and political pressure--resulting from reduced Soviet threats, budget deficits, economic pressures, and social needs--will lead to increasing attempts to reduce the size of our military. Ironically, the destruction of Iraq's army may also increase pressure to reduce defense spending. We will no longer have the threat from the fourth largest army in the world.

The question becomes how much risk can we take militarily in diverting resources for economic and social needs and yet remain a global power? General Colin Powell, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), stated before the US Senate Committee on Armed Services on 1 February 1990:

The Secretary and I know the Department will get fewer funds, we know the armed forces will be decreased in number and that the Department will shrink. We know also that the risk of making these changes is acceptable, that the nation cannot afford to do otherwise. But we must not shatter the armed forces.

This paper assists in the review of national defense requirements within the parameters established by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The presentation of information is in the following sequence. A summary of recommendations follows this

introduction. The paper continues by briefly reviewing the history of our defense legislation and listing the initial provisions of the National Defense Act. Next is a consideration of the impact that inadequate unification has had on the defense establishment. Then, a discussion follows about the changing strategic environment. With those chapters as background, we reach a conclusion about the sufficiency of current national defense legislation.

The second portion of the paper addresses the Unified Command Plan. It begins with a history of the UCP. An assessment follows of the revisions necessary for the UCP to meet national security requirements in a changing world. Research methodology included interviews with academicians and military officials, review of professional journals, books, and historical documents, and discussions with faculty members of the US Army and National War Colleges.

NOTES

1. LTG George L. Butler, speech to Center for Defense Journalism, National Press Club, 27 Sep 90.

CHAPTER 2 - RECOMMENDATIONS

Our analysis of defense legislation and the Unified Command Plan generated the following recommendations. These are provided at the beginning of the paper as a guide for the reader.

- ♦ **Retain the current national defense legislation as amended.**
(In large measure it provides an appropriate structure for national defense).
- ♦ **Establish five unified commands:**
 - ♦ Atlantic Command (LANTCOM)
 - ♦ Pacific Command (PACOM)
 - ♦ Americas Command (AMCOM)
 - ♦ Strategic Command (STRATCOM)
 - ♦ Combat Support Command (COMSUPCOM)
- ♦ **Give STRATCOM the space war-fighting missions.**
- ♦ **Give COMSUPCOM responsibility for transportation, space-based support systems, and joint logistics.**
- ♦ **Make Special Operations Command, Forces Command, and North American Air Defense Command sub-unified commands within Americas Command.**
- ♦ **Rotate command of LANTCOM, PACOM, AMCOM, and COMSUPCOM between all services.**
- ♦ **Rotate command of STRATCOM between the Air Force and Navy.**

- ◆ Change the term "Unified Command."
- ◆ Designate LANTCOM, PACOM, ANCOM, and STRATCOM as unified combatant commands.
- ◆ Designate COMSUPCOM as a unified supporting command.
- ◆ Eliminate the term "Specified Command."
- ◆ Declassify the Unified Command Plan.

CHAPTER 3 - THE NATIONAL DEFENSE ACT OF 1947

The National Defense Act of 1947 was monumental legislation, the most significant piece of national security legislation in the nation's history. Figure 1 identifies the major provisions of that legislation.¹

NATIONAL DEFENSE ACT OF 1947
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Established a cabinet-level Department of National Defense (which two years later became the Department of Defense)◆ Established the US Air Force as a separate service◆ Eliminated the War and Navy Departments◆ Subordinated services to a common secretary◆ Reduced the services to coordinate status◆ Delineated principal functions for the services◆ Authorized the Joint Chiefs of Staff<ul style="list-style-type: none">to prepare strategic plansto provide strategic directionto establish unified commands in strategic areasto act as principal military advisers◆ Established the Central Intelligence Agency

FIGURE 1

The National Defense Act did more than prescribe an organization for national defense. It provisioned a global military structure, sending a strong signal that the United States would not revert to isolationism. The President, assisted by the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), obtained full authority to establish combatant commands in strategic locations around the world.²

These commands could include units from any of the three services: the Army, Navy, or Air Force. With the Air Force gaining designation as a separate service, the issue of unification became increasingly important.

The need for unification was obvious. Still, politicians feared the idea and services resisted it.³ With the German enemy, and its great General Staff, no doubt, in mind, legislators were wary of strong central control of the military. But even more significant was the intense lobbying from military services over roles, missions, and resources. Not surprisingly, the legislators produced a compromise. It was a compromise between unified direction with military advice above individual service interests on one hand and the historic autonomy of the services on the other.⁴ It is also not surprising that many fundamental problems with the National Military Command Structure since World War II are a result of this compromise. According to Harry Howe Ransom, a noted military scholar:

Since World War II, interservice rivalry has been the prime characteristic of the defense establishment . . . With all of the reorganizations since World War II . . . the defense structure continues to resemble an alliance of semi-independent, sovereign units, often engaged in bitter jurisdictional warfare.⁵

President Truman signed the National Defense Act into law on July 26, 1947. The following excerpt from C. Kenneth Allard's book, Command, Control, and the Common Defense, describes the final decisions of the initial Defense Act regarding service autonomy and unification:

The defense establishment would rest upon coordinative lines: not only were the three services to be coequal, but the authority of the JCS and the Secretary of National Defense would be carefully limited. Above all, the essential autonomy of the services, as well as their roles and missions, would continue much as they had emerged during World War II, including the retention of naval aviation and the Marine Corps As passed, the act contained language that made explicit congressional intent regarding unification of the services: it was to provide for their authoritative coordination and unified direction under civilian control but not to merge them. As the official history of the Office of Secretary of Defense points out, "Because the military departments . . . retained the status of individual executive departments, they were still largely autonomous organizations, with nearly full control over their internal affairs." In fact, all powers and duties not specifically conferred upon the Secretary of Defense became part of the authority of each respective departmental secretary. Furthermore, any service secretary, after informing the Secretary of Defense, could appeal any decision relating to his department.⁶

The evolution of the National Defense Act continued in 1948 with conferences in Key West, Florida, and Newport, Rhode Island, to negotiate service agreement on roles and missions.⁷ Significant revisions to the Defense Act followed in 1949, 1958, and 1986. Figure 2 identifies those and other changes.

Later, in chapter 5, we will discuss the changing strategic environment. That will provide the basis to determine if the fundamental and underlying precepts of today's defense legislation are appropriate for our national defense. Prior to making that assessment it is helpful to examine the issue of service unification in greater detail. With that as background it is possible to make a better conclusion about the adequacy of defense legislation.

REVISIONS TO THE 1947 DEFENSE ACT⁸

1949 Amendment

Created Office of Chairman
Limited Joint Staff to 210 officers
Gave Secretary direction, authority, control over DOD
Designated DOD as an executive agency
Broadened Secretary budget role (to prepare/review)

1953 Amendment

Made Chairman responsible for managing Joint Staff
Added six assistant secretaries and a general counsel

1957 Amendment

Reorganized Joint Staff

1958 Amendment

Increased Secretary's control over military departments
Limited Joint Staff to 400 officers
Reorganized Joint Staff
Gave Chairman authority to select Director, Joint Staff
Directed Chairman manage Joint Staff on behalf of JCS
Removed service chiefs from chain of command (President to
SECDEF to Unified/Specified CDRs)
Made JCS advisers to unified/specified commanders
Prohibited Joint Staff from functioning as General Staff

1986 Amendment

Made CJCS Principal Military Adviser
Created position of Vice Chairman
Created J-7 and J-8 Directorates
Limited Joint Staff to 1,627 personnel
Gave CJCS additional responsibilities (strategic plans,
net assessments, contingency plans)
Directed that Joint Staff works for the Chairman
Established Joint Personnel Policies
Expanded CINC authority over personnel and units
Gave CINCs greater voice in programs/budgets

FIGURE 2

In 1986, the first amendment to significantly alter the compromise favoring service autonomy over unification occurred with passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act.⁹ The

next chapter begins by examining the effects of inadequate unification on the Defense Department. It concludes with an assessment of the considerable impact of the Defense Reorganization Act.

NOTES

1. C. Kenneth Allard, Command, Control, and the Common Defense (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990) p. 112.
2. JCS, "History of the Unified Command Plan," JCS Library Research Document, 1983, p. 1.
3. Allard, p. 111-121.
4. Allard, p. 122.
5. Allard, p. 112.
6. Allard, p. 120-121.
7. OSD, "Volume 1 of The History of the Office of the Secretary of Defense" (Washington, DC, OSD Historical Office, 1984) p. 385.
8. Allard, p. 3, 127.
9. Allard, p. 3.

CHAPTER 4 - INADEQUATE UNIFICATION

Although Clausewitz wrote in the nineteenth century of the need for "one supreme commander in a single theater," the United States was slow to learn this lesson.¹ Cooperation, not legislation, was the means to achieve unified effort between the Army and Navy. Not surprisingly, that approach was frequently unsatisfactory. Disputes requiring resolution went to the President, the single "commander" with a view of the entire theater.²

A move toward unification began after the Cuban campaign of the Spanish-American War. The failure of the Army and Navy to cooperate during that campaign led to the establishment of the Joint Army-Navy Board, a precursor of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). But mutual cooperation, not unified command, remained the method for accomplishing joint operations.³

The catalyst to unify military command in the United States came from World War II. At the beginning of the war, our armed forces did not unify commands. The services still followed the doctrine of mutual cooperation, but it quickly became obvious mutual cooperation could not work under the pressure and complexity of a large global war. One of the first prominent leaders to support unified command was General George C. Marshall, Army Chief

of Staff.⁴ In 1941 he appointed a panel, headed by Lieutenant General Joseph T. McNarney, to consider reorganization of the Army.⁵ A memo from General Henry H. Arnold, Deputy Chief of Staff for Air, had a major impact on the effort:

Unity of command should be the basis for both the reorganization of the War Department and the establishment of theater commands This unity of command can only be expressed by a superior Commander, who is capable of viewing impartially the needs and capabilities of the ground forces and of the air forces. Only a superior commander can select the employment which will result in the maximum contribution of each force toward the National Objective. This kind of Unity of Command requires the establishment of a separate command agency; not the subordination of one member of the team to the other.⁶

The reorganization effort led to the establishment of three major commands in the War Department: Army Ground Forces, Army Air Forces, and Army Service Forces.⁷ Allard makes three observations about the reorganization: (1) It was the most drastic and fundamental change in the War Department since establishment of the General Staff. (2) The Air Force won recognition as a "virtually coequal branch" with ground forces. (3) The "unity of command" idea that established the Air Force as an equal branch led to efforts to unify naval participation in some operational theaters. This frequently led to considerable interservice difficulty.⁸

World War II forced the services to evolve from small, separate entities into an armed force that deployed vast land, sea, and air forces in operational theaters around the globe.⁹ The size and complexity of this effort forced the issue of unification but surprisingly had little effect on the chain of command. According to Ken Allard, "The president, acting as commander in

chief, transmitted orders through the secretaries of the War and Navy departments for execution by the Chief of Staff of the Army and the Chief of Naval Operations." President Roosevelt, a former assistant secretary of the Navy, had strong ideas that limited reorganization. His only change of any significance was the appointment of Admiral William D. Leahy as his personal chief of staff.¹⁰

Another major impetus toward unification of the armed forces came from cooperation and competition with the British during the war. The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), which essentially replaced the old Joint Board, provided a corporate body to interact with the British Combined Chiefs of Staff. The JCS came about as a result of the Arcadia Conference in December 1941. Its purpose was to coordinate British-American strategy and provide interservice planning. The JCS was not formally sanctioned during the war. Yet, it quickly became the agency for representation with allied military forces and the "embodiment for the supreme command of all American forces."¹¹ It also had a considerable effect on defense thinking after the war.

Even with a JCS, full unification did not occur during World War II. Two fundamental tensions existed that encouraged service rivalry at the expense of unification. The first related to competition for resources. Divided Army and Navy command during the war in the Pacific generated intense competition for resources. Paul Y. Hammond, in his book, Organizing for Defense, wrote that interservice rivalry influenced distribution of resources

throughout the war. This rivalry led to a disproportionate share of resources in the Pacific at the expense of efforts in Europe. He also noted that it did not take long for the tenuous American service coalition, formed for war in Europe, to fade away completely after Germany's defeat. Then separate Army, Air Force, and Navy commands unswervingly prepared for their individual wars against Japan in the Pacific.¹² The second source of tension was from disputes over the role of air power, especially when the Army Air Force supported naval operations.¹³ These same tensions still exist today; obviously, unification is necessary but not easily achieved.

Although the JCS and unified commands were imperfect, they were preferable to the defense structure that existed before the war. President Harry Truman, in a message to Congress in 1945, commented that "had we not early in the war adopted this principle of a unified command for operations, our efforts, no matter how heroic, might have failed."¹⁴ It is not surprising that the JCS decided to continue unification in peacetime. The Public and the Congress agreed, influenced somewhat by the finding that the Pearl Harbor disaster was in part due to divided command.

After the war the JCS struggled with the problem of divided Army and Navy commands in the Pacific. The extent of the differences between the services was the subject of an Army memorandum: "the Navy is unwilling in fact to place what is called 'a fleet' under other than a naval commander. This stand means

that there cannot be true unified command of the three services unless the joint commander is a naval officer."¹⁵

The services accepted the concept of unified command in the field. Yet, application of the principle at the highest levels of the armed forces was in great dispute. In 1945, during testimony before the Senate, Admiral King argued that unified command in Washington was not necessary to achieve unified command in the field. He stated, "there are positive dangers in a single command at the highest military level. I consider this fact the most potent argument against the concept of a single department."¹⁶ But, of course the Navy was already a unified service. It had its own Navy, its own air force (naval aviation), and its own army (the US Marine Corps).¹⁷

Service parochialism was not unique to the Navy. In that same time, an Army Air Force brigadier general publicly commented: "You gentlemen had better understand that the Army Air Force is tired of being a subordinate outfit The Army Air Force is going to run the show. You, the Navy, are not going to have anything but a couple of carriers which are ineffective anyway."¹⁸ The Army argued that the lessons of World War II clearly demonstrated the importance of an interdependent approach to warfare but land power was the ultimate determinant of victory.¹⁹

Arnold Kanter, in his 1979 study, *Defense Politics: A Budgetary Perspective*, commented on the positions of the services concerning unification:

Each service's efforts to stabilize its own
organizational environment contain the seeds of

unappeasable jurisdictional claims and insatiable demands for additional resources. In the absence of countervailing pressures, the interaction of these efforts will produce interservice rivalries over roles and missions as well as budget shares.²⁰

The services finally agreed to a compromise and the JCS proposed an Outline Command Plan, which President Truman approved on 14 December 1946. In this, essentially the first unified command plan, theater commanders were responsible to the JCS for strategic direction. Component commands dealt directly with individual service headquarters on logistics, training, and administration. The plan established the missions and geographic areas for seven unified commands: Alaskan, Caribbean, Atlantic, European, Pacific, Far East, and Northeast. As a separate provision, Strategic Air Command was the eighth command of the original plan. It was essentially the first specified command, which at that time was a single service command performing a specific function. The Strategic Air Command was under the direct supervision of the JCS.²¹

The Outline Command Plan was the first step toward unification after World War II. Still, the move to unification slowed because of provisions in the National Defense Act of 1947 that passed the next year. That legislation established a tenuous balance that favored service autonomy over unification. While Unified commands encouraged stronger unification, a coordinative structure for the JCS and strong role for service chiefs favored autonomy.²² Service rivalry flourished. Here are some key examples from the cold war era:

- ◆ In 1953 General Bradley cited "compromise rather than integrated policy."²³
- ◆ In 1957 the Rockefeller Committee established the "difficulty is caused by the system and not the members."²⁴
- ◆ In 1958 President Eisenhower stated, "had I allowed my staffs to be similarly organized in the theaters I commanded during WWII, the delays and decisions would not have been acceptable to my superiors."²⁵
- ◆ In 1958 General Gavin noted "the fundamental shortcoming, the Chiefs wear two hats."²⁶
- ◆ In 1979 the Steadman Report expressed "disappointment with the joint military advice."²⁷
- ◆ In 1982 General Jones commented, "We need to spend more time on our war-fighting capabilities and less on intramural squabbles for resources."²⁸

Amendments and other policies maintained the imbalance between autonomy and unification. Since enactment of the original National Defense Act, the subsequent amendments until 1986, the Key West and Newport agreements, and JCS procedures (notably, JCS Publication 2, Unified Action Armed Forces) maintained "carefully crafted compromises between service autonomy and the demands of integrated land, sea, and air combat."²⁹ These compromises left their mark on many military operations.

The negative impact of compromising unification was most obvious in combat and crisis situations:³⁰ the capture of the USS Pueblo in 1968, the Vietnam conflict, the Iranian hostage rescue

attempt in 1980, and the invasion of Grenada in 1983. In the USS Pueblo incident, chain-of-command problems and inadequate unification below the unified command contributed to loss of the ship. Poor unity of command below the Commander-in-chief, Pacific Command, prevented timely reaction from those capable of preventing the capture. In Vietnam the ground war, tactical air war, strategic air war, and naval war were fought as independent, not integrated, actions. This occurred in part because the unified command responsible for Vietnam played only a nominal role in the conflict. In the Iranian hostage rescue, inter-service interests, ad hoc command arrangements, inadequate joint planning, and poor joint training contributed to failure. In Grenada incompatibility of communications between services, unresponsive naval fire support to the Army, and the lack of a unified ground commander were serious shortcomings.³¹

These problems, inadequate unification within unified commands, incompatible communication systems, divided lines of command, incomplete review of plans, excessive service parochialism, and incompatible operating procedures led to increased congressional oversight. In 1986 Congress passed the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act.³² That legislation established many significant changes; most notably, it increased the authority of the Chairman at the expense of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, it gave the unified/specified CINCs a greater voice in resource allocation, it established a Vice Chairman, and it changed joint personnel policies. These and other changes are shown in figure 3.

GOLDWATER-NICHOLS DEFENSE REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1986

Required Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) to give annual guidance for program and budget proposals

Required SECDEF annual guidance for preparation/review of contingency plans

Designated CJCS as principal military adviser to National Security Council (NSC)

Required CJCS to inform NSC of any disagreement or, as appropriate, the range of military advice from JCS members and/or unified/specified commanders

Required, subject to Presidential waiver, that CJCS have experience as JCS Vice Chairman or as unified/specified commander

Transferred to CJCS responsibility for strategic plans, assessments, contingency plans

Created position of Vice Chairman as second ranking officer below CJCS

Required CJCS and Vice Chairman from separate services

Specified the joint staff works for CJCS

Reaffirmed operational chain from President to SECDEF to unified/specified commanders

Authorized President to direct communications through the CJCS

Authorized the President to assign CJCS duties to oversee activities of the unified and specified commands

Required, subject to Presidential waiver, that officers have a joint specialty or service as a general or flag officer in a joint duty assignment before selection as a unified or specified commander

Reaffirmed that commanders within a unified or specified command serve under the authority, direction, and control of the unified or specified commander

Required SECDEF to include in the annual defense budget a separate budget proposal for unified/specified activities when appropriate

FIGURE 3

The balance between service autonomy and unification has changed since passage of the Defense Reorganization Act of 1986.³³ It was legislation as monumental as that in 1947. It was the first major reform occurring not as a result of a major war. It was reform championed by the Congress and in many ways resisted by the Department of Defense. It was reform that had the over riding support of both houses of Congress. It was a resurrection of many ideas from Eisenhower. It was reform that had an immediate impact. And although all results are not known, unification of the Defense Department today is better than at any time in history.

In coordinating this paper with the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, it was readily apparent a higher quality of officer is serving in the joint arena. Most new staff officers have commanded at battalion or higher level, graduated from senior service college, and maintained competitive files for promotion. More high-quality officers now pursue joint duty, in part because of the link to general officer and flag rank promotion. As these officers gain promotions, unification of the services will continue to improve.

Around the Pentagon it is also readily apparent that the voices of the CJCS and unified/specified commanders-in-chief (CINCs) are stronger in comparison to the service chiefs. The Chairman and the CINCs now affect many areas that were formerly in the domain of the service chiefs. This includes areas such as personnel, readiness, acquisition, planning, programming, budgeting, and doctrine.

Another good example of the change in unification comes from the recent war in the Persian Gulf. Although it is too early to establish the precise lessons, that campaign appeared to indicate a degree of unification not seen since the Normandy invasion of World War II. The CINC of Central Command (CENTCOM) demonstrated an unprecedented ability to coordinate service efforts, establish boundaries, determine priorities, accomplish joint requirements, and command his forces. Before the Goldwater-Nichols reform he would have probably faced more interference from the services and less cooperation from adjacent unified commanders. One good example of the unity of command achieved by CENTCOM was in the air campaign. In that campaign CENTCOM integrated US Air Force aircraft (strategic bombers, air superiority fighters, and ground attack aircraft) with US Navy carrier aviation, Army attack helicopters, and Marine Corps close air support. That accomplishment is significant to those who have participated in joint operations or those who fought in Vietnam.

This does not mean that the Persian Gulf War was not without joint operational problems, even in the air campaign. Although unification was arguably practiced at the highest level in modern military history, the pending reduction of force structure presents a compelling reason to continue the development and practice of joint procedures. As structure decreases, favorable combat ratios may be available only by improving joint war-fighting and realizing the synergy of that effort. Many lessons from Desert Storm will

undoubtedly provide an appropriate impetus to improve those procedures.

The success of joint operations in the Persian Gulf also does not mean service parochialism and rivalry have ended. As long as separate services and finite resources exist, we will have competition and rivalry. Those actualities are both beneficial and harmful. Still, history shows the importance of a unified effort. Too little unification is more harmful than too much, both during peace and war.

The Goldwater-Nichols Defense legislation provides a structure that encourages continued efforts to improve service unification. But, as with any reform, unintended consequences occur. There are still many unknowns about the full impact of the Goldwater-Nichols legislation. The legislation is evolving but some concerns have already surfaced. Many argue that the Chairman is too powerful. They are concerned about reduced civilian control over the military. They are concerned that the civilian leadership is deprived from hearing the competing voices of the service chiefs. Some are concerned that we have produced "super CINCs" and that the services have lost too much authority. There is also concern that reforms encourage joint education and experience at the expense of operational and service experience. The remainder of this chapter addresses these concerns and shows why we feel that the improved unification achieved because of the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 is overwhelmingly positive.

The Chairman does have greater authority. But he is still accountable to the Congress and subordinate to the Secretary and the President. He is not a commander. He cannot act unilaterally. His greater authority is also balanced by the greater role Congress has taken in defense matters over the past ten years. It is also balanced by the increased authority of the unified/specified CINCs and their chain of command directly to the Secretary of Defense.

The services have less authority but still have a strong voice. The Chairman must present conflicting service opinions to the Secretary of Defense. There is also nothing in the legislation that prevents the President, the Secretary, or the Congress from seeking the opinions of the service chiefs. Whether those voices are sought probably depends more on the personalities involved. It is hard to imagine a Roosevelt or a Churchill not asking the opinions of many experts. But even in times without such revered statesmen, the opinions of the service chiefs are still available through many forums, meetings, and testimony before Congress. Additionally, the services still have the considerable clout of their large staffs, defense contractors, and other lobbyists. The authority of the services remains considerable.

As to the question of increased authority of unified/specified CINCs, time will tell. But this also appears to be balanced by the Chairman, the Secretary/President, the Congress, and the services. Certainly the results in the Pacific theater of World War II, Vietnam, the Iranian hostage rescue, Beirut, and Grenada indicated the need for their greater authority and more unity of command.

As to the education and personnel policies, it is also too early to guess. The reformers certainly understood the importance of linking promotion to military reform. But the pendulum may have swung too close to joint requirements at the expense of service operational experience. Maybe that imbalance was necessary during the early period of reform. Perhaps the pendulum should swing back toward service experience. Our guess is that more than one track may be necessary to the flag and general officer ranks or that joint restrictions on promotion should get tougher at the two star level.

As stated earlier, we feel that the improved unification from the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 is overwhelmingly positive. The period during and after World War II demonstrated the absolute need for effective service unification. To date, the benefits of the Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 are well worth the cost and any unintended consequences.

In the next chapter we will discuss the changed strategic environment and the threat. That provides a foundation for our continued review of defense legislation. Our goal is to determine if today's defense legislation is still appropriate in light of the many changes in the world.

NOTES

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CHAPTER 5 - A CHANGING STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

"After two world wars in this century, the responsibilities and the burdens of world leadership proved inescapable. The United States had, despite itself, become the guardian of the new equilibrium."¹

-- H. Kissinger

In determining those changes necessary today for national defense, it is useful to compare today's world and strategic environment with that which existed before. The United States emerged from World War II as a superpower. It dominated the world economically, politically, and militarily. It was the only nation with a nuclear weapons capability. Japan and Germany were defeated. Great Britain was no longer a global power. The only challenge, politically and militarily, came from the Soviet Union. That challenge quickly became serious as the Soviet Union developed nuclear weapons, strengthened its military, and exported its ideology of communism.

The United States and the Soviet Union became so dominant after the war that the terms superpower and bipolarity came into use to describe their interaction in the global environment. The themes that dominated US politics in dealing with the Soviet threat became the cold war and containment.² Militarily the US countered the Soviets with a global unified command structure, forward

deployed units, and strategic nuclear weapons. The Unified Command Plan, authorized by the National Defense Act, established the command and control structure for global forward defense.

Ever-increasing Soviet efforts to export communism during the cold war encouraged the United States to steadily increase its number of forward deployed military units. These units strengthened the geographic unified commands and showed increased American resolve. This structure also provided an effective and decentralized ability to react to crisis, an especially important consideration in a world of slow communications, poor strategic intelligence, and inadequate warning time. But from 1960 on, the "marriage of satellites, communications, and computers"³ gave Washington more reaction time and greater ability to intervene directly in crises across great distances. In some ways this obviated the need for an extensive forward deployed unified command structure. Yet, the ever-present Soviet threat provided an important excuse for limiting change to America's defense establishment.

During the "cold war" era, the United States followed five distinct strategies that dealt almost exclusively with the Soviet threat. Those strategies, according to "cold war" scholar Professor John Gaddis included containment, expansion of containment, new look, flexible response, and detente.⁴ The components for all five strategies stem from the prescripts from two of these: containment and flexible response. And since those two provided the enduring principles of our national defense

strategy for over forty years, they are useful references to understand the changing strategic environment. The following overview of Containment and Flexible Response is taken from the work of Colonel Harry E. Rothmann, former Army Fellow at the Naval War College.⁵

CONTAINMENT POLICY

- ◆ ensure national survival
- ◆ protect Eurasian landmass
- ◆ provide access to global community
- ◆ assure leadership role
- ◆ identify Soviets as main threat to survival and focus of containment

FLEXIBLE RESPONSE STRATEGY

- ◆ apply all instruments of national power
- ◆ deter aggression
- ◆ maintain strategic and theater nuclear forces
- ◆ strengthen conventional forces
- ◆ maintain forward defense and deployments
- ◆ establish alliance solidarity
- ◆ promote regional coalitions to achieve stability
- ◆ establish contingency forces for power projection
- ◆ maintain ready mobilizable forces
- ◆ maintain qualitative advantage and competitive strategy

The strategic precepts for containment and flexible response became less appropriate with the end of the cold war, the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, and the emergence of a united

Germany. These events forced the Defense Department to reassess requirements for national defense. During this reassessment it became difficult to identify the threat, at least in terms sufficient to justify current defense spending. Not surprisingly, greater efforts ensued in the academic community and the military to define the threat through use of future trends and global scenarios.

To understand the changing strategic environment, it is helpful to review some of the recent efforts to predict the future. Three future trend analyses are from Francis Fukuyama's article, "Have We Reached the End of History," Paul Kennedy's book, The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers, and Joseph Nye's book, Bound to Lead. The future trends predicted by these authors are "Endism" from Fukuyama, "Declinism" from Kennedy, and "Polycentrism" from Nye. The following summation of these works also stems from the paper by Rothmann.⁶

ENDISM

Fukuyama states that the end of the cold war is the signal that major international conflict is ending in the world. He argues that international military conflicts will be minor, primarily between Third World nations that have not progressed sufficiently in economic and political liberalism. He feels that military forces are losing their utility.

DECLINISM

Paul Kennedy argues that change in the international arena occurs primarily from developments in economy and technology, and these developments affect social structures, political systems, and military power. Nations evolve during these changes through phases of expansion and decline. Kennedy feels the US is showing signs of decline, and power is shifting to the Pacific and Europe. He recommends a reduction in global commitments and defense spending, with investment of the savings in technology, production, and finance.

POLYCENTRISM

Professor Joseph Nye of Harvard offers an alternative view to the declinist view. He states that a reduction of external commitments is wrong in a world of growing interdependence. He argues that a policy of retrenchment will produce the wrong effect, weakening the US instead of strengthening it. Nye feels that America's power has not declined to the degree argued by others. He provides information to show that our share of the world GNP has remained constant over recent time. He also argues that America has vast resources in the information industries, a more important contemporary and future measure of power. He refutes criticisms that America has become overextended in the world and is overspending for national security. His conclusion is that the

United States will continue as the world's strongest traditionally based power in the 21st century. But, he still feels the world will change because of growing interdependence and a diffusion of power. "The use of military forces will become more costly and less relative, but not irrelevant . . . multilateral institutions, may prove more relevant."

We dismissed Fukuyama's argument that major international conflict is ending in the world. The recent war in the Persian Gulf disputes his thesis. Many other regional conflicts are possible: India and Pakistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan, South and North Korea, Vietnam and its neighbors, the Arab nations and Israel, and insurrections in the Philippines, Central America, South America, and Africa. Military forces appear to be gaining importance in many regions of the world instead of losing the usefulness argued by Fukuyama.

We subscribe to Joseph Nye's view of the future, which refutes many of the arguments by Kennedy. We accept Nye's idea of a unipolar world, one where America is not in decline, where military forces are not irrelevant, and where multilateral institutions are gaining importance. Yet his work does not attempt to establish military threats or national defense requirements. The polarity of the world suggests the United States has global responsibilities. It does not help determine the military structure to meet those responsibilities.

In defining military requirements it is important to consider national interests, the strategic environment and the threat.

Professor Sam Huntington of Harvard University provided a helpful assessment on US Strategic Priorities in the 90s at a National Security Seminar on 17 September 1990. Professor Huntington posits that we are entering a new period characterized by a global economy, influential international organizations, and a cascade of Eastern European countries moving toward democracy and market economies. He sees a decline in the nation-state with a rise in ethnicity. Economic power will become a policy determinant. Japan's economic power and Germany's economic power must be balanced. The Soviets will retain a military capability that also must be balanced. The next logical step for China is expansion.

Professor Huntington predicted many specific trends for US defense policy and force structure. Deterrence strategy will become more flexible and movement will occur toward a strategy of balanced equilibrium. Force structure changes will include a reduction in the standing Army, a shift to defensive nuclear forces, and a reduction in forward deployments. Force projection capability and technological superiority are becoming increasingly important. Alliances are becoming less meaningful.

The views of Huntington and Nye also provide an excellent foundation for a threat assessment. The Soviet Union retains the ability to destroy the United States with strategic nuclear weapons. But the Soviet threat is changing. They are beginning to reduce their conventional military capability to cope with serious economic and social problems. The Warsaw Pact is dissolved. War against the Soviets in Europe is becoming an unlikely possibility,

at least on short notice. The chance of war against them outside Europe is becoming even more remote. The economic problems of the USSR are significantly reducing the Soviets' ability to support regional disputes around the world. But this does not mean that military forces are losing their utility or importance. The end of the cold war is not bringing a commensurate reduction in the chances for regional wars. The Persian Gulf War suggests a regional focus for military forces in the future, and one involving weapons of mass destruction. The proliferation of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, as well as sophisticated conventional weapons, continues throughout the world. Many nations are acquiring strong regional military capabilities and are increasingly willing to use force. Religious, ideological, and cultural disputes are more likely than ever to end in resolution on a battlefield.

Although it is impossible to predict the future, we would not be surprised if the following events occurred in the remainder of this century:

- ◆ nuclear attack against a non-nuclear state,
- ◆ expanded Chinese aggression in the Pacific,
- ◆ war between India and Pakistan,
- ◆ civil war within at least one OPEC nation,
- ◆ Pacific and European economic blocs exercising more political influence and increasing their military capabilities,
- ◆ the dissolution of NATO,
- ◆ collapse of some economic systems in Eastern Europe,

♦ regional armed conflict within the USSR.

The strategic environment is obviously and significantly different from the environment that existed during the cold war era. Many of these differences add different dimensions to the national security equation. Figure 4 is our assessment, in part from the ideas of Huntington and Nye, of the specific trends affecting national security.

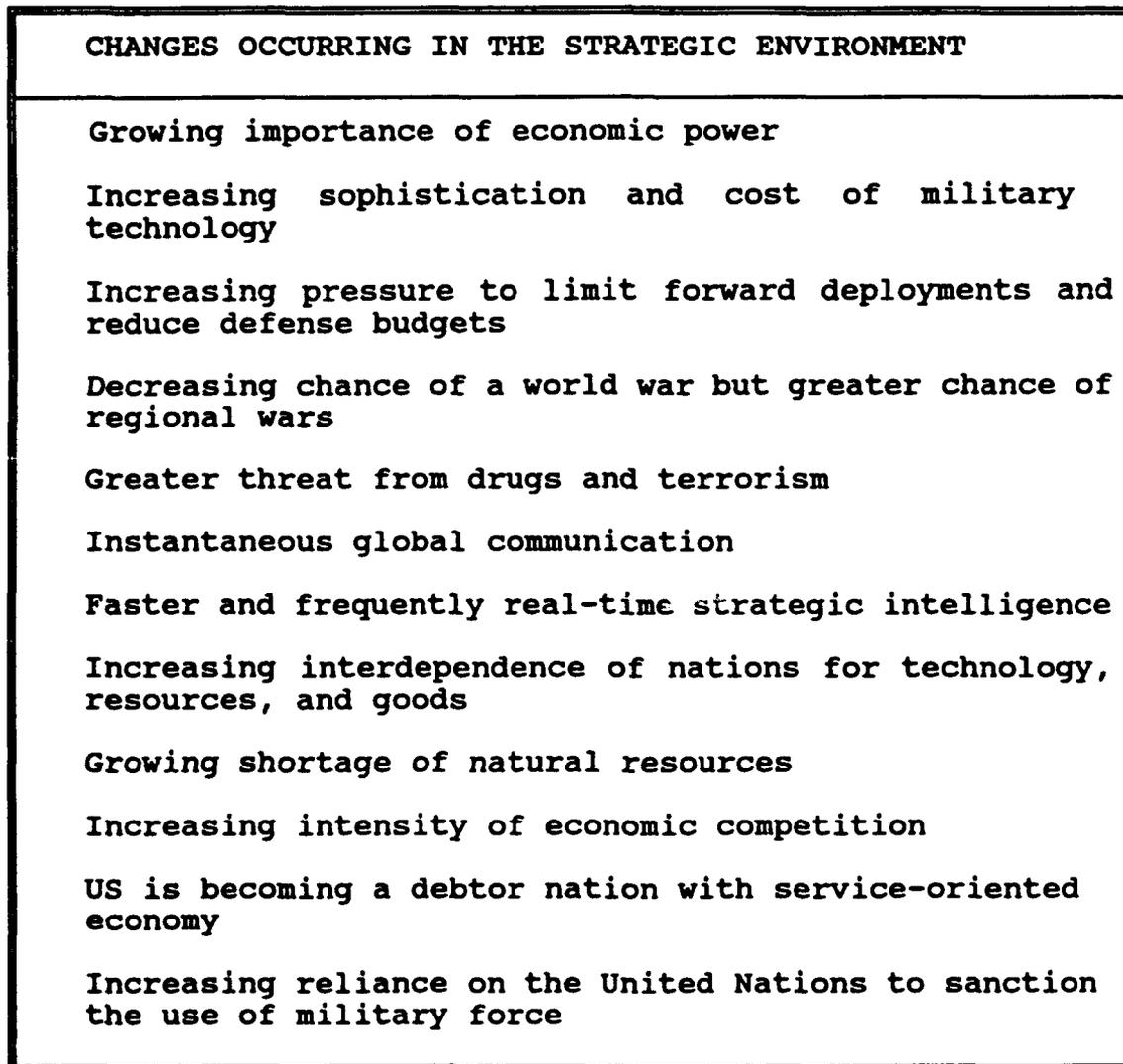


FIGURE 4

How then have our strategic requirements changed? The end of the cold war did not stop all previous commitments and requirements. From containment strategy it is still necessary to ensure national survival, provide access to the global community, and assure our leadership role. The necessity to protect the Eurasian landmass and focus the primary effort against the Soviets is a less obvious requirement. From the flexible response strategy, we still must apply all instruments of national power to deter aggression, maintain alliance solidarity, and promote regional coalitions. We continue to need strategic nuclear forces, mobilization forces, contingency forces, and a qualitative ability to project power. But strengthening conventional forces and maintaining an extensive forward deployment is less urgent after the collapse of the Warsaw Pact.

Today, in a unipolar world, the US is the only nation capable of projecting significant conventional military power around the globe. That situation makes it harder to stay on the sidelines. Even for coalition efforts, the US is compelled to take a leading role. Ironically the reduced Soviet presence serves to hasten a response. The recent war in the Persian Gulf provides a good example. Ten years ago, faced with an uncertain Soviet reaction, it is doubtful the United States would have deployed a large force to Saudi Arabia, at least not as quickly as it did.

Smaller defense budgets, fewer forward deployed forces, and a different force structure are occurring because of the changing Soviet threat. Yet, there are still many compelling reasons for

the US to maintain a global military capability. During the "cold war" era we needed a global military capability primarily to prevent a global war. But the focus in the new world is toward regional contingencies, in areas that now include Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. We still need a global capability to deter or fight in those conflicts. By preventing an imbalance of regional power, the United States helps discourage threats to democracy, human rights, resources, and markets.

The end of the cold war is having an immediate impact, that of reducing the size and forward positioning of the United States' military forces. But as long as these reductions do not take the military below the Chairman's minimum acceptable force levels (the base force), the US will remain the only nation capable of projecting sufficient military power around the globe to protect the access, trade, and economic freedom of an increasingly interdependent world. If that capability is lost, many nations may become encouraged to increase military spending for their security or to gain regional dominance. The use of military forces will become less relative, as argued by Kennedy, only as long as the US maintains a strong and global capability.

The United States will spend less on defense in the future, and rightfully so. The challenge for the Defense Department is to maintain a global capability despite these reductions. Rapidly deployable force packages are essential, with the capability to fight in regional contingencies around the globe. These forces must capitalize on the synergy of joint, combined, and coalition

warfare. They need the capability to respond to crises involving ideological disputes, regional use of weapons of mass destruction, humanitarian relief, environmental disasters, and ethnic clashes. These contingencies will cover the spectrum from low- to mid-intensity, from unconventional to conventional, and from light to heavy warfare. The predominant needs are rapidly deployable and highly ready forces. Mobilization forces are also needed to deter, or ultimately to fight, any high-intensity war. The reduction in force structure and decrease in forward deployed units increases the needs for strategic mobility (fast sea and air lift), intelligence, and rapid deployment. There is also a need for greater flexibility, as proven by the first six months of this year. The US has gone from a major combined arms, air, and land battle in January to major humanitarian relief efforts recently in Liberia, Iraq, and Bangladesh. Finally, the requirement for a modern and capable strategic weapons capability is unchanged.

NOTES

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4. Gaddis, pp. 1-40.
5. Harry E. Rothmann, "The US Army, Strategic Formulation, and Force Planning: Past, Present, Future" (Newport, Rhode Island: Naval War College, July 1990) p. 171.
6. Rothmann, pp. 239-243.

CHAPTER 6 - ADJUSTING DEFENSE LEGISLATION

Does the different strategic environment discussed in the preceding chapter indicate changes are necessary in defense legislation? In answering that question, it is useful to identify the underlying precepts of the National Defense Act and then analyze those precepts in light of the new strategic environment and threat. The fundamental and underlying precepts of today's defense legislation are (1) a strong institution of defense, (2) civilian control, (3) separate services, (4) unified effort, and (5) a global perspective. These precepts might also be thought of as legislated imperatives for the Defense Department. The following list summarizes the general provisions that enable the Defense Department to meet these fundamental precepts.

STRONG INSTITUTION OF DEFENSE

- ◆ Department of Defense as an executive agency
- ◆ National Security Council and National Military Command Structure
- ◆ Budgetary responsibility of Secretary of Defense
- ◆ Balanced authority between President, Secretary, Congress, Chairman, CINCs, and services

CIVILIAN CONTROL

- ◆ Secretary of Defense (subordination of services to common secretary)
- ◆ Chain of command (President to Secretary to Unified/Specified CINCs)
- ◆ Congressional oversight
- ◆ Service Secretaries
- ◆ War Powers Act
- ◆ Acquisition, authorization, and appropriation process

SEPARATE SERVICES

- ◆ Air Force, Army, Navy and Marine Corps
- ◆ Separate budgets
- ◆ Separate training, equipping, and provisioning of forces

UNIFICATION

- ◆ Joint Chiefs of Staff (Chairman, Vice Chairman, Service Chiefs, Staff)
- ◆ Greater authority for CJCS
 - ◆ Principal military adviser to President and SECDEF
 - ◆ Broader role (budget, personnel, planning, assessments)
 - ◆ Reduced authority of service chiefs (relative to Chairman and CINCs)

- ◆ Unified/Specified command structure (services provide; CINCs use)
- ◆ Greater CINC authority (for combatant command, management of personnel, and influence over service programs and budgets)
- ◆ Special Operations Command (separate budget and Assistant Secretary)
- ◆ Joint personnel policies

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

- ◆ Unified commands in strategic areas
- ◆ Alliances and treaties

The changing strategic environment and the changing threat have not obviated or changed the need for these fundamental precepts. We still need a strong institution of defense to protect our vital and global interests, to prevent a strategic nuclear attack, to inhibit the abuse of regional power, and to prevent the escalation of any conflict to global war. Civilian control is still necessary to provide effective oversight over our military--the strongest in the world--and to balance the increased authority of the Chairman and the unified/specified CINCs. Separate services are still necessary to provide an appropriate decentralization of effort and competition for resources, systems, roles, and missions. A unified defense department is more important than ever: to fight effectively on an increasingly complex and integrated battlefield, to maintain a technological and

qualitative advantage, and to conserve scarce defense dollars. And, finally, our global presence is still necessary to ensure the freedom, access, and trade of an increasingly interdependent world.

Our defense legislation has evolved to produce a strong Department of Defense. Effective civilian control through the President, Secretary of Defense, and Congress balances the greater power and authority of the Chairman and the CINCs. Unification is better than at any time in our history. Less autonomous, yet separate, services still have a strong voice in defense matters. The greater role of the Chairman and the unified/specified CINCs helps eliminate duplication of effort and waste of defense dollars. The benefits of separate services are still available: to decentralize training and development efforts, to establish an essential professional identity and heritage for service members, and to maintain the focus for specific realms of combat. We still have a global capability to meet our global needs and fulfill our global role. Our conclusion: current defense legislation is in large measure appropriate today and for the foreseeable future.

But certain areas do require further review. Reduction in forward deployed forces, increased chance of regional conflicts, advances in communications and intelligence capabilities, and declining defense budgets make necessary a review of the global combatant command structure. The improvement in unification achieved by the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act may eliminate the need for Special Operations Command's separate budget authority. Reductions in defense spending indicate it is time to

review roles and functions of the services. The need to maintain a balance between service qualification and joint experience requires an ongoing review of joint personnel policies. The importance of joint war-fighting capability makes necessary a continuing assessment of the CINC's ability to influence service programs and budgets. The debate over presidential authority to commit the nation to war indicates a need to review the War Powers Act. The increased authority of the Chairman and the unified/specified CINCs may conversely create a greater role for service secretaries in balancing that authority. Ironically, the role of civilian secretaries of defense might be better performed within the unified commands. At that level they might be better positioned to work with the Department of State on security assistance and with the Office of the Secretary of Defense on the acquisition priorities of the unified command.

The remainder of this paper addresses changes required in the global, unified and specified, command structure. We will consider those changes necessary in the Unified Command Plan. The other areas identified for review--roles and functions of services, the need for service secretaries, joint personnel policies, and the War Powers Act--are not examined in this paper. We recommend these as appropriate topics for additional study.

CHAPTER 7 - THE UNIFIED COMMAND PLAN

The failure to achieve unity of command in the Pacific during World War II provided the impetus to establish a postwar system of unified command. On 1 February 1946 the Chief of Naval Operations described the division of Army and Navy forces under separate commands in the Pacific as "ambiguous" and "unsatisfactory." He argued for a single command with a joint staff to exercise "unity of command" over all US forces in the theater.¹

The Army and Army Air Force positions favored the assignment of mission and forces to achieve unity of command rather than the area of responsibility approach by the Navy. A compromise emerged as an "Outline Command Plan" that established a worldwide system of unified command under control of the JCS. President Truman approved the Plan in December 1946, establishing the provisions listed in figure 5.²

The Outline Command Plan established the seven unified commands (Far East, Pacific, Alaskan, Northeast, Atlantic, Caribbean, European). As a separate provision, the JCS recognized Strategic Air Command as the eighth command. Consisting only of units from the Army Air Force, it was essentially the first specified command. However, the term specified command did not

come into use until 1951.³

MAJOR PROVISIONS OF THE 1946 OUTLINE COMMAND PLAN
Unified commands will normally include two or more services.
Each service component will be commanded by an officer from that component.
Each unified commander will have a joint staff representing all components.
Commanders of component forces will communicate directly with services on matters such as administration, training, supply, construction, and expenditure of funds.
The JCS will determine the assignment of forces.
The JCS will exercise strategic direction and prescribe missions and tasks.
The services will retain operational control of all forces not assigned by the JCS.
Each unified command will operate under a designated Service Chief who is functioning as an executive agent for the JCS. ⁴

FIGURE 5

Unified commanders did not have logistic or administrative authority under the original plan. In an amendment on 7 September 1948 the JCS made unified commands responsible "for coordination of logistic and administrative support of the component forces of their unified command." This authority was subject to legislative, departmental, and budgetary limitations, regulations, and considerations.⁵

In yet another change, on 29 September 1948, the JCS assigned responsibility to the unified commands for theater-level joint

planning. The JCS stated, "this planning will be accomplished for all three Services, and will include plans for the employment of such other forces as may be available for meeting a general emergency."⁶ However, planning for employment of strategic air forces could only include provisions for logistics.⁷

Much of the remainder of this chapter provides background information about the UCP to guide the reader through the discussion of our recommended changes. It is primarily from Armed Forces Staff College Publication 1, The Joint Staff Officer's Guide.⁸

A unified combatant command is a command with broad, continuing missions and forces from two or more military departments. A specified combatant command is a command with broad, continuing missions and forces from a single military department. The difference between the two is the number of services comprising the command, unified having two or more and specified having only one. The Unified Command Plan establishes the basic guidance for commanders of unified and specified commands, delineates general geographic areas of responsibility, and specifies functions.

The chain of command to the combatant commands, as reaffirmed by the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act, is from the President to the Secretary of Defense to the combatant commands. The act continued the practice of allowing the President to direct communications to the combatant commanders through the Chairman. However, as a change the act now allows the Secretary of Defense to

assign oversight of the combatant commands to the CJCS. The role of the Chairman in respect to the combatant commands is essentially threefold: a communications link between the National Command Authority (NCA) and the combatant commanders; to provide oversight of the combatant commands, as directed by the Secretary of the Defense; and spokesman for the combatant commands.

In the past, directive authority to combatant commands for logistics was a contentious issue. More definitive guidance in the Unified Action Armed Forces directive in 1986 resolved much of the dispute. That directive makes the services responsible for logistics and administrative support of forces assigned or attached to the combatant commanders. In peacetime the CINC may refer logistics disputes to the services for resolution and then forward unresolved matters through the CJCS to the Secretary of Defense. During war the CINC has greater authority and responsibility to control facilities and supplies of all forces under his command.

There are four primary approaches a combatant commander in chief may take in organizing his command: subordinate unified command, service component command, joint task force, and functional component command. The subordinate unified command is a smaller copy of the unified command, with forces from two or more services and a joint staff under one commander. The service component is a command with forces and staff from a single service. The joint task force is similar to a sub-unified command, but established for a specific purpose and dissolved after achieving that purpose. The functional component command is normally, but

not necessarily, composed of forces from two or more services for a particular operational mission of long or short duration. The least unified, yet common approach to organizing unified commands is through use of service components.

Many changes occurred to commands and boundaries in the UCP over the years. Figure 6 depicts changes from 1951 to 1987.⁹

Today there are five combattant commands with a geographic basis: Pacific Command, Atlantic Command, European Command, Southern Command, and Central Command. There is one combattant command with a functional basis: Strategic Air Command. There are four commands with only a functional basis: Space Command, Special Operations Command, Transportation Command, and Forces Command. Figure 7 shows the current boundaries for the five geographic combattant commands.

The Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act addressed many of the problems of the combattant commands. The provisions of that act

- ◆ clarified the chain of command;
- ◆ increased the authority of the CJCS and combattant CINCS;
- ◆ decreased the authority of the Service Chiefs;
- ◆ clarified the role of the CJCS;
- ◆ provided CINCs authority to influence programs, budgets, and training; and
- ◆ established joint personnel policies.

Because of these changes the combattant command structure is better and more capable of accomplishing operational requirements.

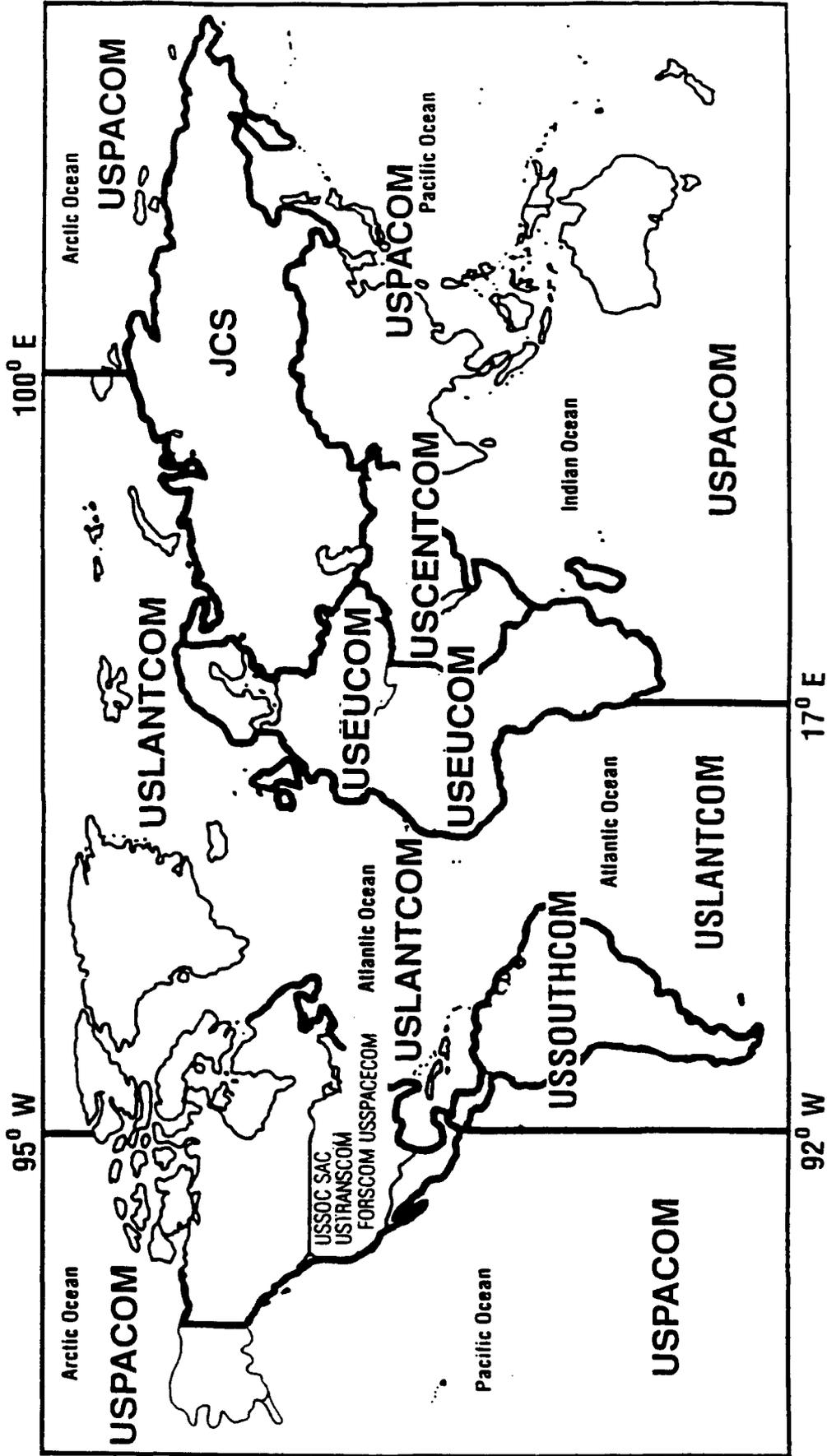
CHANGES IN THE UCP

- 1951 -- Established US Air Forces Europe (USAFE) as a Specified Command
- 1954 -- Established Continental Air Defense Command (CONAD) as a Joint Command
- 1956 -- Changed USAFE from Specified Command to Service Component
-- Eliminated Northeast Command
- 1957 -- Eliminated Far East Command
- 1958 -- Changed CONAD from Joint Command to Unified Command
- 1962 -- Established US Strike Command
- 1963 -- Changed Caribbean Command to Southern Command
-- Changed Naval Forces, Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean to service component
-- Changed name of Strike Command to Readiness Command
- 1975 -- Eliminated Alaskan Command
-- Eliminated Continental Air Command
-- Established Aerospace Defense Command as a Specified Command
- 1977 -- Established Military Airlift Command (MAC) as a Specified Command
- 1983 -- Established Central Command from the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force
- 1985 -- Established Space Command
- 1986 -- Eliminated Aerospace Defense Command
-- Established Special Operations Command
- 1987 -- Eliminated MAC as a Specified Command
-- Established Transportation Command
-- Established Forces Command as a Specified Command

FIGURE 6

CURRENT UNIFIED COMMAND BOUNDARIES

FIGURE 7



But some problems remain. Disputes and problems exist over boundaries. Service-specific commands encourage service rivalry. A lack of unification exists within unified commands. A CINC spends a disproportionate amount of time on his duties that are unrelated to war-fighting, such as military-political activities, diplomatic duties, and security assistance. The use of the terms "unified" and "specified" is confusing. The classification of the UCP unnecessarily restricts the external review desired of any military plan. The next chapter addresses these and other problems.

NOTES

1. JCS, "History of the Unified Command Plan", JCS Library Research Document, 1977, p. 1.
2. History of the UCP, p. 2.
3. History of the UCP, p. 2-4.
4. History of the UCP, p. 3.
5. History of the UCP, p. 6.
6. History of the UCP, p. 7.
7. History of the UCP, p. 6.
8. Armed Forces Staff College Publication 1, The Joint Staff Officer's Guide (Norfolk, Virginia, July 1988) p. 41-49.
9. Colestock, p. 10-12.

CHAPTER 8 - CHANGING THE UCP

Many arguments are possible for retaining the current unified command structure. It provided a global military capability that met the challenges of the "cold war" era. It worked pretty well for more than forty-five years. It helped prevent global war. It produced victories in Grenada, Panama, and Kuwait. There are valid concerns about reducing the number of geographic commands and making those remaining commands larger. Would this give too much power to a small number of CINCs? Would we be asking too much of a CINC in expecting him to employ increasingly sophisticated weapons and technology over an area that might cover one-third of the globe? Will the State Department resist a move that would put so much military-political power in the hands of one command?

In support of retaining the UCP without major change, General F. F. Woerner, former Commander-in-chief of Southern Command, stated: "I don't see a direct relationship between the reduction of the potential for major conflict in Europe and advocacy for a reduced number of unified commands . . . just instinctive reaction is that conflict will increase."¹ So, why change when the United States faces an unstable Soviet Union, increased chance of regional conflict, and nuclear proliferation in the Third World?

We feel there are reasons more compelling than these to change the unified command structure. And now that the threat of world war is less, an unparalleled opportunity is at hand to implement those changes. Reducing the number of unified commands offers many advantages. It reduces the span of control of the Secretary of Defense and the President. It increases the authority of the CINCs by reducing their numbers. They will have a stronger voice in the areas of requirements, budgets, and advice to the National Command Authority. These many benefits serve to balance the greater authority given the Chairman by the Goldwater-Nichols reform.

Reducing the number of unified commands helps focus the use of scarce communications, intelligence, and space-based resources. It reduces the top-heavy headquarters structure and unnecessary overlap of capabilities, thereby reducing cost. This helps achieve the reduction in the number of flag officers as requested by the Chairman.

Reducing the number of unified commands could improve unification by reducing the single-service orientation that exists in some commands, such as the maritime orientation of Atlantic Command. This also permits greater rotation of unified command billets between the services, helping reduce service rivalry. The increased tri-service orientation of the geographic commands also serves to better prepare the CINCs to assume the increasingly complex, joint-service role as Chairman. Over time this increased multi-service perspective may even reduce service intransigence on issues such as strategic sea and air lift.

Fewer commands means fewer boundaries and fewer players to dispute those boundaries. Fewer unified commands covering larger areas of the globe also encourage the CINCs to assume a supporting and strategic role instead of a supported and tactical role. Larger commands also help reduce the differences between diplomatic and Unified Command Plan boundaries. This could serve to encourage the Departments of State and Defense to develop compatible diplomatic and military goals. An exchange of senior liaison officers between geographic unified commands and the Department of State could also improve this process.

The time is right to change the Unified Command Plan. The reduced chance of a world war presents the first real opportunity in nearly forty-five years to consider a major change in the combatant command structure. Problems in the Soviet Union and dissolution of the Warsaw Pact reduce the threat of a conventional world war in the near future. It is less vital for the US to maintain a structure designed to counter an immediate Warsaw Pact attack in Europe and simultaneously fight Soviet-supported insurrections around the world. The chances for regional war are greater. Yet, these wars are less ominous because the Soviets have less influence and a smaller capability to counter our reaction. The United States simply does not have its immediate survival at risk from a conventional war because the threat in Europe is less. A large number of global commands is not necessary to insure our survival as a nation or to protect our vital interests.

An unstable Soviet Union is a serious concern since it may increase the threat of a cataclysmic nuclear attack on the United States. Yet a global expanse of commands does little to deter this threat. These commands do not significantly influence the internal problems of the Soviet Union. Likewise, a global expanse of commands has little effect on the problems of nuclear proliferation and use of those weapons in the Third World.

We have too many commands. World War II was fought with essentially three unified commands, one in Europe and two in the Pacific.² That was probably one too many. We now have more geographic unified commands than we did in World War II (five instead of three). This larger number controls a smaller force against a lesser threat than during that global war. More commands are not necessarily beneficial. A greater number increases the service-specific nature of some, such as the Navy-dominated Atlantic Command or the Army-dominated Southern Command. This encourages service rivalry and disputes over boundaries while reducing unification. A smaller unified command structure requires fewer headquarters and fewer general officers. Those officers will have a broader responsibility, that of employing increasingly sophisticated technology over a larger area. But those demands can be met by increasing the unification within the unified commands. An increase in sub-unified commands and a corresponding decrease in service-component commands will improve unification.

The global expanse of combatant commands was more essential at the beginning of the cold war era. Today's capability to

communicate instantaneously, gather intelligence, and automate procedures did not exist during most of the "cold war" era. The United States had less time to be warned of an attack and fewer cumbersome administrative procedures. Those realities increased the need for a forward presence and a large expanse of global commands. Now technological advances that improve intelligence, increase warning time, improve administration, and speed communications permit a reduction in forward deployed units and numbers of commands. But as we reduce this structure we must not forget to increase strategic lift.

Other problems exist that are inherent to the current unified structure. A CINC spends a disproportionate amount of time on duties unrelated to war-fighting, such as military-political activities, diplomatic functions, and security assistance.³ Although these are essential tasks, they do detract from strategic planning, force development, and joint exercises and training. Other problems exist. A lack of unification exists below the unified command level.⁴ And the classification of the UCP unnecessarily restricts the external review desired in any military plan. Changing the UCP can help solve these problems.

In looking at the issues for and against changing the Unified Command Plan, it became obvious that the plan provides many strengths:⁵

- ♦ It is a uniform and systematic approach.
- ♦ It is global in expanse.
- ♦ It provides single- and multi-service operations.

- ◆ It is simple and straightforward.
- ◆ It is pragmatic.

CHANGING THE UCP

Our conclusion was to change the plan from the margins (albeit fairly large margins) instead of designing a totally different approach. We selected the issues listed below for review. Discussion of these issues, and rationale for their selection, follows in the sequence listed.

- ◆ the number and type of commands
- ◆ boundaries
- ◆ rotation of command
- ◆ size
- ◆ unification below the unified command
- ◆ supported versus supporting orientation
- ◆ timing of change
- ◆ other changes

NUMBER OF AND TYPE OF COMMANDS

By accepting the broad viability of the current plan and from our assessment of the strategic environment, we kept the idea that a global expanse was desirable. But we concluded global coverage can be accomplished with fewer commands. In reducing the number of unified commands two important considerations became important: (1)

We needed to keep any command essential to our survival as a nation. (2) We could eliminate commands with functions or areas that could be assumed by other commands.

STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND

The only short-term threat to our survival as a nation is from a Soviet intercontinental ballistic attack with nuclear weapons. The USSR remains fully capable of destroying the United States with a single, cataclysmic attack. This is an area of military capability the Soviet Union will maintain and improve. This capability does more than provide their security; it maintains their legitimacy as a major power. Thus, our first priority was to retain Strategic Air Command (SAC) as a Unified Command. But we also identified changes appropriate for SAC. As a unified command, it should control all strategic assets of the nuclear triad and all space based weapons systems. These weapons systems all have complimentary functions. For efficiency and improved control, it is appropriate to have all of these systems in one command. When that change occurs, a different name for the command is appropriate. It should become Strategic Command (STRATCOM).

ATLANTIC AND PACIFIC COMMANDS

The US position as a free-trading nation, bordering two oceans, provides another major consideration. Forward defense,

continental defense, and access to other nations requires a strong presence in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. These oceans provide the sea lines of communication essential to forward defense and the depth necessary for defense of the continent. They provide the seaway for free trade. Obviously these oceans must be controlled by a unified command. But should those commands also have responsibility for major land areas? We determined they should.

No navy in the world, except the Soviets in limited areas of capability, challenges the United States' control of the seas. There are many regional naval powers but no other global naval power. For that reason we decided to make the Atlantic and Pacific part of larger commands.

THE AMERICAS

As the US reduces defense spending, military structure, and forward deployments, the Americas become more important to national security. Continental defense, force readiness, early warning, and security assistance in the hemisphere are some of the missions gaining importance. Greater efficiency in the organization of continental forces is necessary to ensure these missions are accomplished as spending is reduced.

To achieve greater efficiency, it is possible to place North American Air Defense Command (NORAD), Forces Command (FORSCOM), Tactical Air Command (TAC), and Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) in a single unified command. They could be organized as sub-unified

commands or service components of an Americas Command. Later we will consider the inclusion of special operations in this same command. But first we will complete this initial assessment.

The early warning function of NORAD fits in Strategic Command, but that approach is not possible. The Canadian government is unwilling to allow their participation in NORAD to become part of SAC. Because of their position, we decided to make NORAD part of Americas Command. That proposal has the advantage of linking NORAD to the continental defense missions performed in Forces Command, Tactical Air Command, and Southern Command. It is a logical fit and one to which the Canadians would probably agree.

The location of FORSCOM, TAC, and SOUTHCOM in the Americas and their current roles in continental defense are compelling reasons to organize them as part of one unified command. Making these three commands subordinate to a single unified command permits unity of effort in the hemisphere for continental defense, security assistance, and force readiness. A single command in the Americas also reduces the difficulty of interdicting drug trafficking in the Western Hemisphere. Instead of drugs grown in SOUTHCOM, shipped through LANTCOM, and sold in FORSCOM, only one command would deal with the problem.

A major function for FORSCOM and TAC is the readiness of Army and Air Force mobilization units and the readiness of active units that are responsible to more than one unified command. With the reductions in force structure and budgets, a coordinated unified approach to force readiness becomes increasingly important. Making

FORSCOM and TAC service components of Americas Command offers an effective and efficient means of accomplishing this important responsibility.

An Americas Command with this recommended structure and these important missions will equal the stature of the other geographic unified commands. This permits it to compete for resources more effectively than is possible with a FORSCOM and a SOUTHCOM. And since the Americas will increase in its importance to national security, this is an important consideration.

EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST

For geographic reasons and better control over lines of communication, Atlantic Command (LANTCOM), European Command (EUCOM), and Central Command (CENTCOM) could be combined. The arguments against that approach include three major issues. (1) NATO requirements are extensive and vital. (2) The span of control when combining three major commands might be excessive. (3) The Middle East may not receive appropriate attention if it is linked to Europe.

Those are important considerations. But an effective case can be made for combining the Atlantic and Europe into one command. The Atlantic is integral to any defense of Europe but is not an excessive requirement from a unified perspective. Also, the US role in the NATO defensive alliance is lessening. It is increasingly possible that a European will become the Supreme

Allied Commander of Europe in the not too distant future. The J-5, JCS, commented recently on the future of NATO: "It will be more mobile and versatile. NATO will rely increasingly on multinational corps made up of national units. Readiness of active units can and will be scaled back."⁶

Yet, the combination of the Atlantic, Europe, and the Middle East could result in too little attention being paid to an unstable area vital to our economic health: the Middle East. The void resulting from a similar decision in the past required the establishment of the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force and later CENTCOM. We also see firsthand today the importance of the Middle East in the aftermath of the war to liberate Kuwait. However, this disadvantage could be overcome through a change in the organizational structure of the unified command.

An effective way of meeting the requirements of the far-flung LANTCOM empire is through sub-unified commands. This would provide a four-star command in NATO from the unified CINC. Sub-unified commands could then be established and oriented to the Mediterranean and the Middle East. These sub-unified commands would be organized similar to the Joint Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg, focused specifically on war-fighting without the overhead of the unified command. The unified command could then assume more of a supporting and strategic role early in any regional war of low or middle intensity. This solution provides an appropriate focus on the vital regions: Europe, the Middle East, and the Mediterranean. It provides sub-unified organizations that

offer many advantages: (1) improvement of unification; (2) appropriate focus on the important tasks of training and fighting; and (3) flexibility for the unified command to assume a greater strategic focus and a supporting instead of supported role.

COMMONALITY OF FUNCTIONS

Of the remaining unified and specified command structure, those with functions that might fit in other commands include Special Operations Command (SOCOM), Transportation Command (TRANSCOM), and Space Command.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS

SOCOM's capability stems from the collective special operations resources of all services. With the increased chances for insurrections, terrorist attacks, and unconventional conflicts, it is important to retain SOCOM as an entity and not spread this function across all geographic unified commands. History has shown the need for a dedicated command to insure that special operations receives adequate emphasis and resources. But we do not feel, in the aftermath of the Goldwater-Nichols reform, that special operations must remain as a separate unified command. If special operations became a sub-unified command in Americas Command, it would belong to an organization with the broad mission of force readiness. If it were a sub-unified command, it would retain a a

tri-service perspective. It would also still be located in the area where the preponderance of special operations will occur -- the Americas.

TRANSPORTATION

An argument might be made to let each unified joint staff accomplish the total transportation requirement. Transportation support is an essential function in all conflicts. But there are compelling reasons not to perform the TRANSCOM mission within each unified command. Those functions are difficult to accomplish within each unified command because of their broad and national scope. TRANSCOM has the requirement to support all combatant commands by mobilizing transportation from every sector: the private, the public, and the military. Then it marshals, coordinates, and schedules use of these disparate resources. That is simply too large a task, as proven by the recent deployment for Operation Desert Storm, for execution within each unified staff. But it is possible to perform that function in a single unified command that has responsibility for other combat support functions. That command could be designated Combat Support Command (COMSUPCOM). It would have responsibility for transportation, joint logistics, and other combat support to all of the other unified commands.

SPACE

Another command with a primary combat support function is Space Command. It is not a combatant command, especially if the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) and anti-satellite functions are given to STRATCOM. Today Space Command's primary mission is assisting other unified commands in communicating, navigating, gathering intelligence, and forecasting weather. Ultimately space will become an area of combatant command. At the appropriate time it should become a unified combat command. Until that time arrives, and for the foreseeable future, it is possible to perform the space support functions as a sub-unified element of Combat Support Command. This is a change that also complements the efforts by Military Airlift Command and Transportation Command to have control over more space functions.

THE RECOMMENDED COMMANDS

That leaves five unified commands. In summary, the five unified commands would become Strategic Command, Atlantic Command, Pacific Command, Americas Command, and Combat Support Command. With these changes, another opportunity is available, to eliminate the confusing term of specified command. All commands under our change are unified commands. Four are combatant commands and one a supporting command. Therefore, it is appropriate to designate LANTCOM, PACOM, AMCOM, and STRATCOM as Unified Combatant Commands.

Combat Support Command would be designated a Unified Supporting Command.

BOUNDARIES

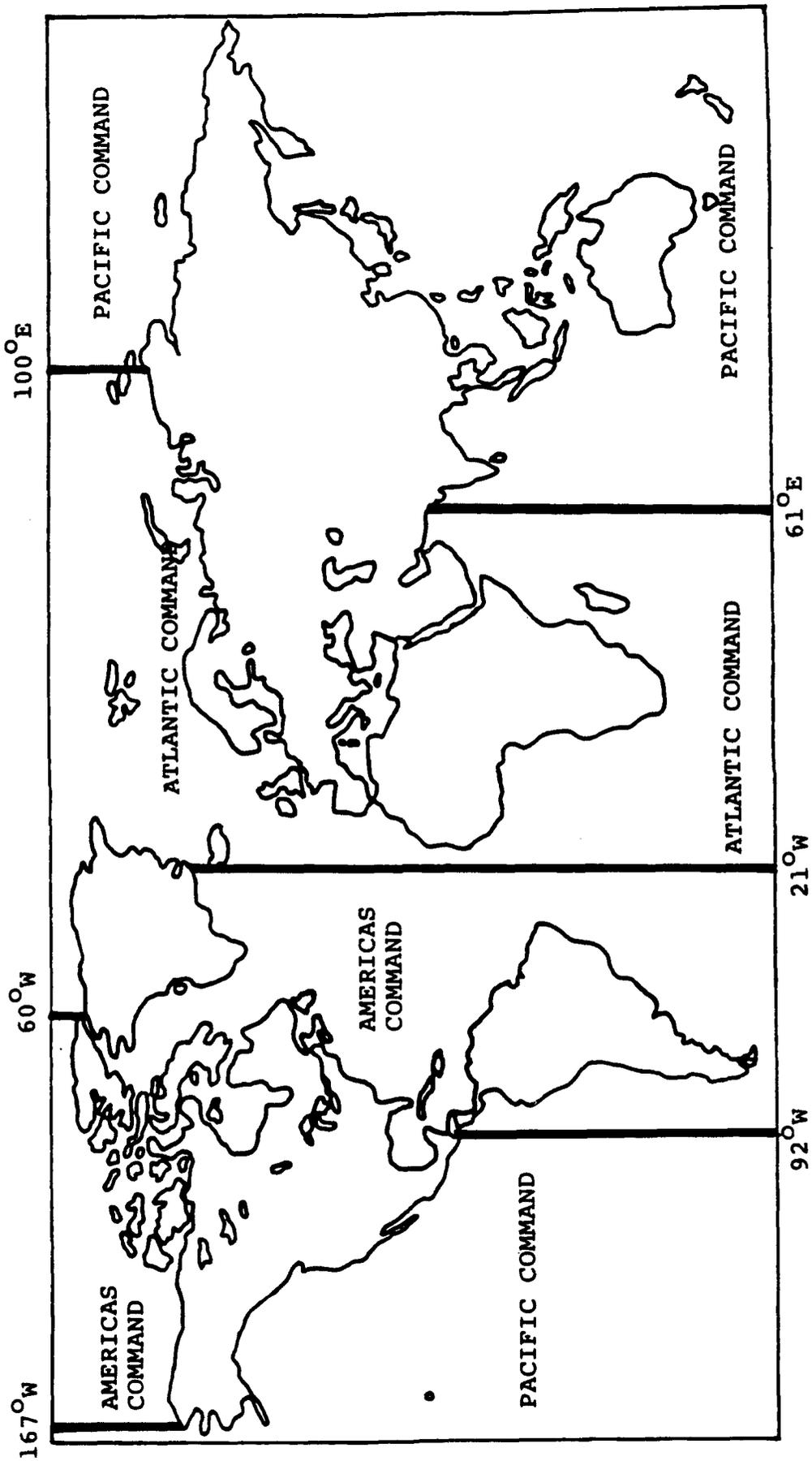
In establishing boundaries, consideration must be given to the threat, geography, lines of communication, national borders, and ideological differences. It is desirable to consider boundaries from a tactical perspective. In other words, boundaries should not split avenues of approach and should change whenever necessary for operational reasons. There should be extraordinary flexibility in adjusting strategic boundaries. JCS Publication 2 provides guidance:⁷

In establishing commands, it is not intended to delineate restrictive geographic areas of responsibility for carrying out missions assigned. Commanders may operate assigned forces wherever required to accomplish their missions. Forces directed by or operating under the strategic direction of the Joint Chiefs of Staff may also conduct operations from or within any geographic area as may be required for the accomplishment of assigned tasks, as mutually agreed by the commanders concerned or as directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

For the Americas Command the boundary should encompass North America (including Alaska and Canada), the Caribbean, Mexico, Central America, and South America. It also should include the blue water necessary to support theater operations in any of those regions. This boundary provides some definite advantages. (1) It allows a single focus to continental defense, drug interdiction, security assistance, and force readiness in this hemisphere. (2)

RECOMMENDED BOUNDARIES FOR THE UCP

FIGURE 8



It includes Cuba as a part of South and Central America, areas where Cuba has major influence.⁸

For Atlantic Command the boundary would encompass the Atlantic Ocean, less that portion contiguous to Americas Command. It also would include the current EUCOM boundary, the current CENTCOM boundary less Pakistan, plus blue water in the Indian Ocean adjacent to CENTCOM and blue water adjacent to Africa. It would give the CINC control of all air and sea lines of communication to his vital regions, Europe and the Middle East. For Pacific Command the boundary would extend from the western edge of the Americas boundary to the new LANTCOM boundary. The Joint Chiefs of Staff would maintain responsibility for the Soviet Union. Figure 8 shows the boundaries for these revisions to the UCP.

These boundaries give all three geographic commands the flexibility to conduct operations in the three dimensions of land, sea, and air. That is extremely important. According to General Woerner, "a unified commander should not be separated from the tri-dimension of his responsibilities--land, sea, and air. I needed a blue-water authority in SOUTHCOM and did not have one -- That hurt."⁹

Fewer boundaries provide other advantages as well. There is a reduction in the need to conduct across-boundary operations, a difficult task. Lines of communication are not split. There is less potential for dispute over differences in boundaries with the Department of State. Commands lose their service-specific orientation. With Atlantic Command expanded to encompass the areas

of European and Central Commands, it is no longer a maritime command. It could be commanded by an officer from any service.

ROTATION OF COMMAND

A change in the service-specific nature of the commands leads to another recommendation that could reduce service rivalry and improve unification. The reduction in commands, expansion of area, and commonality of functions allows rotation of the billets for LANTCOM, PACOM, AMCOM, and COMSUPCOM between all services. Thus, STRATCOM would become the only command not rotated among all the services. It would rotate between the Air Force and Navy. Counting the position of the Chairman and Vice Chairman, seven positions could rotate among the four services. A ratio of two positions each to the Army, Air Force, and Navy and one to the Marine Corps at any one time is possible. Rotation of billets could continue the improvement in unification begun by the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act.

SIZE

The major disadvantage of a larger geographic command area is the increase in duties and responsibilities that occurs from any expansion. A combatant CINC already spends an inordinate amount of time on his duties that are not directly related to war-fighting, such as diplomatic activities, military-political requirements, and

security assistance. Those requirements would increase with the expansion of area. The solution to this problem is not to establish more unified commands but to change the organizational structure below the unified command.

UNIFICATION WITHIN THE UNIFIED COMMAND

A CINC has great latitude in determining the organizational structure of his command. The UCP allows him to establish sub-unified commands, joint task forces, service-specific commands, functional components, or service components.¹⁰ A problem of service-specific commands and service components is the lack of unification. The problem with a joint task force is that it is frequently an ad hoc organization that lacks the permanency required. The sub-unified structure appears to be the best organizational choice. That structure, with the proposed adjustments in boundaries, provides unified commanders a better opportunity to remain focused on all duties and missions.

The major benefit of the sub-unified command organization is that it gives the CINC a mechanism to insure a portion of his command remains focused on war-fighting and joint training. That leaves him free to accomplish his primary strategic responsibilities. According to the Unified Action Armed Forces directive, those strategic responsibilities include "the assignment of tasks and direction of coordination among subordinate service elements for unity of effort, communication and coordination with

CJCS on strategic and logistical plans, and the strategic and operational direction of assigned forces."¹¹ It also leaves him free for other necessary responsibilities: communications with the NCA, coordination with the services (for budgets, programs, training, logistics), and performance of military-political and security assistance responsibilities.

SUPPORTED VERSUS SUPPORTING ORIENTATION

The sub-unified organization could also be forward deployed and provide a greater degree of flexibility for the unified command. That would reduce the pressure for the unified command to deploy prematurely to a theater of operations. It would free the CINC to concentrate during the early stages of a conflict on his most essential tasks of advising the National Command Authority, marshalling resources, and shaping the strategy, the theater, and the forces. In other words it allows him to become more of a theater commander, a supporting instead of supported commander. A possible disadvantage is having a sub-unified commander in a theater committed to war-fighting but not committed to the broader military-political dimensions of national security. In a world of limited resources that limitation may be necessary.

What then are the specific requirements for sub-unified commands? Atlantic Command would have sub-unified commands oriented to the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Pacific Command would have a sub-unified command oriented to Northeast Asia. Americas

Command would have three sub-unified commands, oriented to South and Central America, to special operations, and to space.

PHASING THE CHANGES

Changes to the Unified Command Plan should occur over the next five years in the order of Strategic Command, Combat Support Command, Americas Command, Pacific Command, and European Command. This allows Strategic Command to stabilize all strategic nuclear changes before any disruption from changing other commands. It then allows Combat Support Command to build a structure to serve as the basis for supporting the new geographic commands. Next, Americas Command could implement changes involving continental defense, force readiness, and special operations before changing those commands with forward responsibilities. Then Pacific Command would assimilate Pakistan and form a sub-unified command for Northeast Asia. That change is simpler than the one facing Europe. With Atlantic Command changing last, the situation in Europe and NATO can stabilize.

RECAPITULATION OF BENEFITS FOR FEWER GEOGRAPHIC COMMANDS

A distillation of the arguments for fewer geographic unified commands covering larger areas helps highlight the key issues. To that end, we present the following recapitulation of our case for changing the command structure in the UCP:

- ♦ Fewer unified commands reduces the span of control for the President and Secretary of Defense.
- ♦ Reducing the unified command structure gives each remaining CINC a greater voice and thus a better balance to the greater authority of the Chairman.
- ♦ Reducing the structure helps focus the use of scarce communications, intelligence, and space based resources.
- ♦ Fewer commands helps reduce the top-heavy headquarters structure and unnecessary duplication of capability.
- ♦ Reducing structure helps eliminate the service specific orientation now existing in many unified commands.
- ♦ Reducing the number of unified commands increases the tri-service orientation of those remaining, better preparing CINCs for subsequent service as the Chairman.
- ♦ Fewer commands mean fewer boundaries and less possible dispute over those boundaries.
- ♦ Fewer geographic commands covering larger areas of the globe encourage CINCs to assume a supporting instead of supported command focus.
- ♦ Reducing the number of unified commands and eliminating the service specific orientation of those remaining could improve unification and reduce waste of defense dollars.

OTHER CHANGES

We also identified two other changes appropriate during this revision of the UCP. These two changes relate to the separate budget authority of SOCOM and the overall classification of the Unified Command Plan.

Because of historical problems in funding, training, and employing special operations forces across the services, legislation now authorizes SOCOM to have a separate budget. That authorization occurred before the Department of Defense realized the full impact of the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act. The success of Goldwater-Nichols in increasing the authority of the Chairman and the CINCs reduces the need for this special SOCOM provision. The combatant CINCs can now influence service decisions, programs, and budgets without having to maintain the overhead to accomplish those functions. In fact, a recent poll of the CINCs revealed that the majority felt no need for separate budget authority.¹² The CINC of Americas Command will have adequate authority to influence requirements and budgets for his sub-unified command for special operations. Therefore, we recommend elimination of SOCOM's special budget authority.

We also encourage declassification of the UCP. The plan contains little information that is actually classified. However, the relatively small amount of sensitive information in the UCP serves to limit distribution of the plan and inhibit critical review. The protected information in the plan could be easily

covered in a classified annex or separate document. Declassification might also make service members more knowledgeable about the Unified Command Plan.

NOTES

1. Gen F. F. Woerner, interview, Boston University, 5 December 1990.
2. Allard, p. 105.
3. Woerner.
4. USAWC Selected Readings, p. 119.
5. US Army War College Briefing on the UCP, undated.
6. Butler.
7. JCS Pub 2, UNAAF, p. 50.
8. Woerner.
9. Woerner.
10. AFSC Pub 1, pp. 77-78.
11. AFSC Pub 1, p. 72.
12. US General Accounting Office Report, Defense Reorganization Progress and Concerns at JCS and Combatant Commands, March 1989, pp. 33-44.

CHAPTER 9 - CONCLUSION

Our fundamental defense legislation is still appropriate for the post cold war environment. The underlying precepts of that legislation, though founded in 1947, remain valid. We still need a strong institution of defense, civilian control over the military, separate services, unification of the Defense Department, and a global capability. The changing strategic environment and the changing threat have not obviated or changed the need for these fundamental precepts.

A strong institution of national defense has evolved. Effective civilian control through the President, Secretary of Defense, and the Congress provides an appropriate balance to the increased power and authority of the Chairman and the unified commanders-in chief. Less autonomous, yet separate, services compete for resources, systems, doctrine, roles, and missions. This effectively reduces the duplication of effort and waste of defense dollars. Unification of the Defense Department is better than ever because of the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act. Our global presence and global capability helped end the cold war.

The recent and significant changes in the world--the Soviet Union's instability as a nation, the dissolution of the Warsaw

Pact, and the growing strength of the European community--lessen the threat of a large conventional war in Europe. These changes permit reductions in force structure and changes to the Unified Command Plan. But in making these reductions we must not debilitate our institution of defense. It is indeed a unipolar world. The United States is the only nation capable of projecting sufficient military power around the globe to protect the access, trade, and economic freedom of an increasingly interdependent world. The use of military forces will become less relative only as long as the United States maintains a strong and global capability. Future revisions to defense legislation must maintain the focus on the fundamental and underlying precepts that have kept our defenses strong. With that thought in mind we recommend the changes we have already outlined.

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