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GOLDWATER-NICHOLS: THE NEXT EVOLUTION – REORGANIZING THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

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The Goldwater-Nichols reorganization Act of 1986 was signed into law by president Reagan on 1 October 1986. The law made the most significant changes to the functions and structure of the United States Military since it's establishment by the National Security Act of 1947 that established the Department of Defense.

Congress sought to reorganize the Department of Defense to address the many problems they saw in the United States military. “Goldwater Nichols was designed to increase civilian control of the military, improve the military's advice to senior civilian leaders, improve military effectiveness and to increase attention to the formulation of strategy and to contingency planning.”

Despite all the progress made, the Goldwater-Nichols Act must evolve further to meet the Congressional objective of "jointness."
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This paper will examine the influence of the four services on joint operations with a view to recommending evolutionary changes and further modifications to the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act to meet the Congressional objective of "jointness." This paper seeks to answer the following: Has Goldwater-Nichols gone far enough? What improvements are still necessary to enhance the effectiveness of military operations and improve DOD management and administration?

The intent of the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 was to integrate the separate competencies of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines for effective joint warfighting. Congress stated this intent in the Act's policy section and expressed the desire to enhance the effectiveness of military operations and improve Department of Defense management and administration.¹ Recent studies indicate continued poor inter-Service coordination during military operations. Extensive studies of the Gulf War and operations in Kosovo and the Balkans cite continued complications caused by inefficiency and lack of service cooperation.² Victory in these conflicts has become the rationale for preserving the status quo.³

The Goldwater-Nichols reorganization Act of 1986 was signed into law by president Reagan on 1 October 1986. The law made the most significant changes to the functions and structure of the United States Military since the establishment of the Department of Defense by the National Security Act of 1947.⁴ Congress sought to reorganize the Department of Defense to address the many problems they saw in the United States military. Goldwater-Nichols was designed to increase civilian control of the military, improve the military's advice to senior civilian leaders, improve military effectiveness, and to increase attention to the formulation of strategy and contingency planning⁵. By reorganizing the Department of Defense, Congress believed they could correct the problems they saw in the United States military.⁶ The global scale of military operations in World War II and the apparent need for larger and more complex joint operations required alterations to the U.S. military's command structure.⁷ Efforts to reorganize the U.S. military's senior command structure began in earnest following the war's end, with the debate especially tumultuous because World War II had destabilized the balance of power between the services.⁸ World War II military operations demonstrated the critical importance of air power in both land and naval warfare and thus fostered a general sense that the emerging Air Force service would be preeminent.⁹ In 1947, a permanent Joint Chiefs was established by act of Congress, and in 1949, the position of chairman was created.¹⁰ There are many arguments pro and con concerning Goldwater-Nichols. Some say the Act went too far and just
as many say it did not go far enough. Despite all the attention, the organizational structure of our bureaucracy and of our defense establishment is an essential part of our national strategy. For full implementation of Goldwater-Nichols, we must change Service funding control and Service dominance over the shaping of service component commands of the combatant commander. Service components must be organized, equipped and trained to fight as Joint Task Force components without redundant layers of command and control (C2) and logistics. A major hindrance to accomplishing this task is service parochialism and a focus on individual service warfighting capabilities. This single service focus produces service-optimized units and systems that are not organized, equipped or trained to efficiently perform joint operations.

Joint control over Service research, development, acquisition and transformation to new organizational structures is required. The system today is seriously flawed because each chief, as head of his own service, is also expected to vote against service parochialism for the sake of national interest. This flawed arrangement can be corrected with reorganization of our bureaucratic JCS structure. To implement joint control and change single-Service warfighting establishments, we must terminate the dual-hat responsibilities of Service Chiefs as members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). Each service can appoint four-star members to the Joint Chiefs of Staff as principal advisors to the National Command Authority. The newly organized JCS can also represent the joint interest of the Combatant Commanders. Having no responsibility for their particular service the JCS can then devote their full energy to coordinating our joint armed forces. They can legitimately provide joint focus and guidance to service chiefs for training, organizing and equipping joint forces.

To support the new Joint Chiefs organizational structure, an appropriate realignment of OSD, JCS, and Service Staffs is necessary. Realignment to JCS authority including budget authority is required for effective reorganization and to provide the required joint control over research, development, and acquisition. This change will allow the CJCS to fully influence programming decisions during the Program Objective Memorandum (POM) cycle with his Chairman's Program Recommendation and his Chairman's Program Assessment. Joint control over Service research, development, acquisition and organizational structures will fully enforce the Goldwater-Nichols Act and improve our joint warfighting efficiency and integration.

I. BACKGROUND

The National Security Act of 1947 created the Department of Defense, headed by a cabinet post created for the Secretary of Defense; it also established three military departments subordinate to the Secretary of Defense. Each of the three departments (the Army, the Air
Force, the Navy) are headed by a civilian Secretary with cabinet rank. In addition the act created the National Security Council, the Central Intelligence Agency, and a Joint Chiefs of Staff.

In 1949, The National Security Act was amended to strengthen the authority of the Secretary of Defense and the position of chairman was also created. No other major changes were made until 1958. In 1958, the Reorganization Act of 1958 further strengthened the authority of the Secretary of Defense and of the assistant Secretaries of Defense. This Act reorganized operational forces and directed that they be assigned to the unified and specified commands. The Reorganization Act of 1958 also officially authorized the Commanders in Chiefs (CINCs). This Act formally removed the Secretaries of the military departments from the operational chain of command and at the same time, the Chairman of the JCS was made a voting member of the JCS, and the Joint Staff was enlarged to 400. No other major changes occurred between 1958 and 1986.

In 1982 a new debate began concerning reform of the Department of Defense (DoD). The United States' experience in Viet Nam and post Vietnam began to raise questions as to the effectiveness of defense organizations and the mechanisms for planning and managing combat operations involving joint action. Principle issues included the quality of military advice given the President and the national military establishment; the need to redefine the role of the JCS; the need to strengthen the authority of the unified and specified combatant commanders; and the unnecessary duplication of roles within the defense organization. Additional criticisms leveled at DOD included price overruns and antiquated procurement practices.

Former Chairman of the JCS, General David C. Jones, criticized the JCS system because of organizational inadequacies and because he favored increased authority for the Chairman. General Jones also claimed that structural problems diminished the effectiveness of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. His observations were soon followed by similar criticism of the Joint Chiefs of Staff by retired General Edward C. Meyer, a previous Army Chief of Staff. This precipitated wide debate and a series of Congressional hearings on the subject of reform.

Following the public statements and in response to these criticisms, the Investigations subcommittee of the House Committees on Armed Services, under Chairman Richard C. White, held hearings in August 1982. These hearings led to the preparation and passing of the Joint Chiefs of Staff reorganization Act of 1982. Although the Senate Committee on Armed Forces considered this Act, the 97th Congress took no action. In June 1983, Senators John Tower and Henry M. Jackson began a review of the entire Department of Defense. The study
continued throughout 1984-85, encompassing all major organizations and decision-making procedures of DOD.  

Senate and House committees, in addition to a Presidential Blue Ribbon Commission on Defense Management, continued to study Defense Organization during 1985-86. By 1986 five separate bills were introduced in the Senate and the House and two major studies had been completed concerning reorganization of DOD. Early in 1985, Senators Barry Goldwater and Sam Nun led a task force to review the drafts of the previous study and released their results entitled Defense Reorganization: The Need for Change. One of the reports findings concluded that organizational changes could be effected through the Planning, Programming and Budgeting System (PPBS). By 1986, it was evident to many that DoD should be significantly reorganized. Several lengthy studies followed by Senate hearings supported reorganization and concluded that organizational change could be effected best through PPBS. In 1986, Senator Barry Goldwater and Congressman Bill Nichols sponsored and won passage of the Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, commonly referred to as the Goldwater-Nichols Act.  

II. STRATEGIC GUIDANCE CONCERNING CONDUCT OF JOINT OPERATIONS

The world situation and military capabilities to deal with each situation is constantly changing. Any attempt to prescribe detailed procedures for all future or even present contingencies is not feasible. However, it is desirable to provide clear strategic objectives and allow subordinate organizations the latitude, control, and resources to accomplish objectives. The 1986 Goldwater Nichols Act provides the strategic guidance for the Armed forces to conduct joint operations. As, such the Department of Defense underwent a major reorganization. With the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act emphasis shifted from individual service autonomy to that of Joint Operations. This Act was the most important legislation affecting U.S. national defense since the National Security Act of 1947 and represents the U.S. military and Congressional attempt to resolve inherent organizational tensions in the command and control of military forces. Before 1986, The JCS had the responsibility to provide military counsel to the Secretary of Defense and the President. The advice had to be consensus advice and not separate opinions. Consequently the JCS spent thousand of man-hours producing least common denominator documents that every chief would accept but few Secretaries of Defense or Presidents found useful. This arrangement persisted until passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act. This Act made the Chairman the principle military advisor to the president and the SECDEF. The service chiefs are still advisors and encouraged to give their
counsel and even disagree with the chairman. But the Chairman as the principal advisor provides advice to the President whether or not a consensus is reached. The Act also established regional Commanders In Chiefs (CINCs) and charged them with conducting warfighting in their areas of responsibility.

III. JOINT ISSUES

The problems of joint operations are not new. There have been difficulties encountered coordinating joint operations for decades. During World War II, there was no unity of command below the president for Army and Navy operations in the Pacific. Without unity of command there was no sharing of intelligence or coordination of surveillance operations. The incorrect assumption that the other service was performing surveillance, combined with no integration of intelligence on Japanese operations, allowed the Japanese to successfully execute their surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. After Vietnam, and after much public debate, Congress recognized these deficiencies and implemented the Goldwater-Nichols Act.

Implementation of Gold Water-Nichols has been slow because of our bureaucratic processes. It can be said that changes in a bureaucracy are rarely sweeping, but incremental in nature. It’s easier to get support for small changes to an existing policy than to get support for a radical new policy. In the text “Classics of Public Administration,” Lindbloom supports this by saying,

“It is a matter of common observation that Western democracies change their policies almost entirely through incremental adjustments. Policy does not move in leaps and bounds. Part of the reluctance for sweeping changes comes from a desire to avoid mistakes. A wise policy-maker consequently expects that his policies will achieve only part of what he hopes and at the same time will produce unanticipated consequences he would have preferred to avoid. If he proceeds through succession of incremental changes, he avoids serious lasting mistakes.”

Implementation of Goldwater-Nichols thus far has been a series of incremental changes at the slow steady pace of our democracy. This paper will recommend additional incremental changes required to fully implement the Congressional intent of jointness as outlined in the 1986 Goldwater Nichols Act. The incremental changes will require additional debate in Congress and possibly new legislation for implementing these changes. Our history has proven that radical change is rarely accomplished without a stimulating or significant emotional event.

Building consensus is a key ingredient to improved joint force structuring and reorganization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The voices providing advice to the Chairman, JCS are dual-hatted Chiefs of Staff of their respective services, each with a view of the world
understandably colored by that responsibility.\textsuperscript{47} This structure has proven to be inadequate and does not fully accomplish the strategic objective of jointness. The task to reorganize the JCS will involve consensus from civilians controlling the military as well as military decision makers. Previous reorganization issues centered the debate on a totally centralized control "General Staff concept" as opposed to a complete decentralization of the DoD structure.\textsuperscript{48} Civilian authority did not favor the General Staff, but, complete decentralization of military authority would result in all services attempting to accomplish their own objectives and in some cases without coordinating their actions with joint objectives and requirements. However, unity of command and prioritizing the use of scarce available resources are necessary at all levels and are the ways our military actions can be both efficient and effective.\textsuperscript{49}

The four services continue to have undue influence on joint operations. Presently, the Service Chiefs influence joint operations through their Title X responsibilities for providing trained and ready forces. Section 3062, United States Code Title X, requires the services to train, equip and organize forces for prompt and sustained combat.\textsuperscript{50} The services fulfill their specific requirements and then attempt to meld their training to joint specifications. Fulfilling the requirements of Title X and the intent of Congress is an arduous task. The services must constantly change and adapt to changing threats to our national security and to the assignments of new domestic and international missions as may be directed by the Congress and the President.

Unfortunately the services tend to fulfill their responsibilities and develop their systems in a vacuum with little evidence of joint considerations.\textsuperscript{51} Although Goldwater-Nichols provides the Chairman, JCS with input to the Service Program Objective Memorandums (POMs) through his Chairman's Program Assessment (CPA), evidence shows that the joint influence over service programs is wanting.\textsuperscript{52} As evidenced by the recent transformation debate found in the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review, there is little evidence of joint involvement in the equipping, training or structural changes the Services intend to make.\textsuperscript{53} Much of the DoD transformation plan consists of a traditional approach to procurement.\textsuperscript{54} Major platforms such as combat aircraft, surface ships and transport vehicles constitute the core of the plan and the services intend to modernize their major types of combat capabilities largely independently of each other.\textsuperscript{55} The adage of the golden rule applies here, "The man with the gold makes the rules."

Continued improvement is needed in the realm of joint operations. During the Gulf War, the Joint Forces Air Component Command (JFACC) dictated air operations for the Air Force and the Navy, yet the Marines resisted yielding control of their air assets, eventually giving up
control of only 50 percent of their F-18 aircraft.\textsuperscript{56} Additionally, the lack of communications interoperability between Air Force bases in Saudi Arabia and Navy aircraft meant that the daily tasking order had to be airlifted to the carriers so the Navy pilots could receive their assignments.\textsuperscript{57} This condition was eventually corrected before the end of the war. Another example of a disconnect between the services was the April 1994 shoot down of Army Blackhawk helicopters by Air Force F-15 aircraft during Operation Provide Comfort in northern Iraq.\textsuperscript{58} It is still unclear whether this disconnect is only an interoperability issue, a failure to follow guidance issue, or some of both. Incidents like these may continue unless joint considerations and interoperability become a top priority for development of service equipment, training, organization and doctrine.

Full implementation and incremental changes to the Goldwater Nichols Act have been affected by two great challenges confronting the U.S. military. The first, the unforeseen end of the Cold War, led to decreased budgetary allocations and accordingly increased competition among the services for resources.\textsuperscript{59} The second great challenge facing the US military is the application of advanced technology to the military sphere, the so-called revolution in military affairs.\textsuperscript{60}

The post-Cold War reduction in U.S. military personnel aggravates the services' frustration with Title IV (joint duty) requirements. The Services have less manpower but still have requirements for assigning members to joint duty. However, the Goldwater Nichols Act's strengthening of warfighting CINC authority and laying the foundation for improved joint operations is most apropos for the post-Cold War, in which the U.S. will deploy joint task forces on short notice in numerous missions other than war.\textsuperscript{61} The US military's Unified Command Plan (UCP) divides the world into geographic regions, with the overall commander in each region, the CINC, heads a unified command with operational control of military assets in his geographic area. Each service provides a service component command under a service component commander. The service component commanders must answer to two masters one being the regional CINC for operational orders, and the second being the service superiors for equipment and training.

Although legislation exists to support the Combatant CINC, whether the policy has been fully implemented is still open to interpretation. Existing perceptions are of regional, powerful CINCs with political and economical clout.\textsuperscript{62} However there is evidence that the CINCs have yet to assert full authority over forces in their theater of operations and have experienced difficulty when trying to conduct operations.\textsuperscript{63} While the CINC has enormous warfighting responsibility and normally has combatant command (COCOM) during military operations, he continues to
experience problems with responsibilities of authority over their service component commands. Problems in this area still exist as evidenced by operations in the Balkans as experienced by General Wesley K. Clark as the CINC European Command, while organizing for Task Force Hawk. This was the very kind of situation that the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols legislation intended to address by enhancing the authority of the theater commander in relation to the Service Chiefs.

"In a special meeting of the Joint Chiefs, the Army reportedly opposed the deployment of the Apache. Shelton said, you know I'm having a hard time back here with the Chiefs. The Army Chief just doesn't want to send them in. I pressed the case for the Apaches. Sir, they can get there and do what nothing else can. And we are in this fight. It is war, as far as we're concerned, and we've got to have the means to win it. Surely we're not going to deny a wartime commander in chief the assets we need to win?"64

This case above describes a service chief using his influence to overrule a CINC involved in a warfighting environment. The evidence suggests that the service chief did not support the CINC and was more inclined to continue daily operations and training. The service chief appears to favor events and preparation that would not delay the service transformation plans and readiness objectives. During World War II, Hitler faced similar disagreement from his Army service chief while planning operations to defeat and occupy his strategic objectives in Norway. German Army Chief of Staff, General Franz Halder repeated voiced his disagreement and concern. The German General believed that the Army would need at least two years to rebuild, train and equip before the army would be able to successfully attack and hold Norway.65 Hitler overruled his Army Chief and the Germans employed a joint force of army, navy and air force units recorded as the first joint operation.66 Hitler was able to coerce his Army chief and then directed the Army to fully support the Norway campaign.

The invasion of Norway was a stunning success for Germany and demonstrates that cooperation among the services was an absolute precondition for success.67 General Clark was not able to get support from the Army Chief, was not able to immediately deploy TF Hawk and we still face difficulties in the Balkans today. One suggestion to preclude future disagreement of this type is to organize service components to fit into joint task forces (JTFs) without intervening or redundant layers of command and control. Service components must be able to support the CINC without the intervention of the service chiefs. The service chief's role should be of supporting the CINC after voicing disagreement, instead of using a higher authority to overrule a CINC. According to the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), current service transformation programs do not appear to address this need of organizing to fight in JTFs.68
Recommendations from the QDR suggest the need for a strong link between weapons procurement, doctrine and organizations for combat. According to the QDR, if joint control was exerted over service research, development and acquisition, transformation to new structures for warfighting can occur. Service transformation efforts are organizing and developing forces without joint influence or oversight. As stated in Joint Forces Quarterly, "Transformation that occurs without joint influence and oversight will not change the single service warfighting establishments." Further, JTF HQ's must contain sufficient expertise from all services to make deployment of redundant single service command and control unnecessary.

The second great challenge facing the US military is the application of advanced technology to the military sphere, the so-called revolution in military affairs. Such technology offers the US military three choices: each service can develop its own systems, each service can develop unique systems and then utilize even more advanced technology to enable the systems to cooperate or, the services can focus on developing trans-service systems. The Army transformation and DoD overall appears to be developing unique systems and then using more technology to integrate the systems for joint warfighting. Data from the QDR shows that the Department of Defense budget still consists of a traditional approach to procurement. Major platforms such as combat aircraft, surface ships, and transport vehicles constitute the core of the plan, and the services intend to modernize their major distinguishing types of combat capabilities largely independent of each other. The QDR goes on to say that examination of the DoD budget reveals a continued focus on major weapons platforms and does not present any new categories of technology investment that allows the external observer to discern a shift in basic investment approach.

IV. TOWARD MORE JOINTNESS

The 1985 Senate Staff study by Senators Goldwater and Nunn, stated that the JCS did not have a significant role in providing joint military input to DOD's programming and budgeting process. Consequently, the resource allocation process did not yield the optimum military capability with the resources available. The Goldwater Nichols Act attempted to correct this by providing the CJCS with a joint role in programming and budgeting.

"The 1986 GNA solidified the role of the Secretary of defense in the budgeting process. The Act directed the Secretary of Defense to provide the Services with written guidance for the preparation and review of program recommendations and budget proposals. The Act also requires the Secretary of Defense to include in the annual budget request a separate budget proposal for those activities of the unified command plan and specified combatant commands which the Secretary deems appropriate, such as joint exercises, joint force training and
contingencies. In 1994, the military's training for joint operations took a large step forward when U.S. Atlantic Command (USACOM) was assigned the role of supervising joint training and integration, although USACOM has lacked training funds and has met service resistance to the diversion of forces from service-specific joint training.  

Evidence from the 2001 QDR suggests that joint training is still a low priority. "Joint and service training and experimentation has a higher priority than it once did but it is still a small budget item. In the years ahead, research and development budgets are expected to decline, even in the relatively inexpensive and critical areas of basic science and technology."7

The Goldwater-Nichols Act also gives the chairman the power, subject to the discretion of the secretary of defense and the president, to make budgetary recommendations in order to conform the services' budgetary proposals to the secretary of defense's strategic guidance and to the CINCs' needs.79 A most critical development in the budgetary area has been the emergence of the Vice Chairman and a joint body called the Joint requirements Oversight Council (JROC) as major players in the resource allocation arena.80 The JROC is used as a means to analyze and recommend cross-service tradeoffs on resource allocation issues.

"As Vice chief, Admiral William A Owens, expanded the JROC's focus to assessing existing systems in order to remedy apparent deficiencies in joint warfighting potential and to eliminate whatever senseless duplication existed around the services. To accomplish this task, Admiral Owens instituted Joint Warfare Capability Assessments, composed of teams of Joint Staff officers assigned to nine mission oriented areas. The JWCAs were designed to cross the established bureaucratic categories, which Admiral Owens hoped would destabilize the settled order and generate innovation. This increasingly muscular role for the JROC heightened the services resistance; a situation that was exacerbated when Admiral Owens took the JROC into territory previously reserved for the services such as quality of life and salary issues."81

Today, our armed forces continue to operate redundant systems. The JROC and USACOM now named JFCOM, have been unable to overcome this predicament and replace the current paradigm with one that shapes decisions on joint force design and acquisition.82 The JROC has not yet acquired sufficient strength to challenge the services for preeminence in weapons procurement.83 As noted in the 2001 QDR, service control of funding and influence in shaping such decisions remains unchanged. Service influence over warfighting as evidenced recently in operation Allied force and noted by general Clark has remained unchanged even with the policy enacted under the Goldwater-Nichols Act and strengthening of the CINCs authority.
V. HAS GOLDWATER-NICHOLS GONE FAR ENOUGH?

The preceding examples persuade me that implementation of Goldwater-Nichols has not gone far enough to meet Congressional intent of joint strategic operations. This is evidenced by marginally effective but inefficient joint operations as noted in the 2001 QDR. What improvements are still necessary to enhance the effectiveness of military operations and improve DOD management and administration? A recommended step is to transfer budget authority to Chairman, JCS and strengthen the JCS staff. As stated in the 2001 QDR, "DOD made few plans to reorganize main combat units, increase their interdependence and jointness, or alter priorities within the weapons modernization program." The CJCS needs budget authority to accomplish the objectives of Goldwater-Nichols and the 2001 QDR. It is not the intent of this paper to determine the amount of budget authority required. Budget authority and funding control are tools required to effective implement the radical changes required to accomplish joint objectives.

How do we reform our defense management processes to produce effective joint forces with significantly reduced resources? For full implementation of the intent of Goldwater-Nichols, we must change Service funding control and Service dominance over the shaping of service components. Service components must be organized, equipped and trained to fight as Joint Task Force components without redundant layers of command and control (C^2) and logistics. A major hindrance to accomplishing this task is service parochialism and focus on individual service warfighting capabilities. This single service focus produces service-optimized units and systems that are not organized, equipped or trained to efficiently perform joint operations.

"Much of the DOD modernization plan consists of a traditional approach to procurement and the services intend to continue to modernize their major distinguishing types of combat capabilities largely independent of each other." Referencing the JCS system before 1985, general Colin Powell said, "The system was seriously flawed. Each chief, except the chairman, is head of his own service yet also expected to vote against service parochialism in the national interest. Jointness is produced out of necessity of the moment rather than built into the machinery." Little has changed under Goldwater-Nichols. General Powell's view of jointness eschews the notion that jointness involves a strong centralized decision maker in favor of a looser notion in which the services merely cooperate sufficiently to accomplish the mission without arguing who gets the game ball.

Joint control over Service research, development, acquisition and transformation to new organizational structures is required. To implement joint control and change single-Service
warfighting establishments, we must terminate the dual-hat responsibilities of Service Chiefs as members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). To eliminate service parochialism appoint four-star members to the JCS and eliminate their Service responsibilities. The new members can support the Chairman as principal advisor to the National Command Authority. The newly structured JCS can also fully represent the joint interest of the Combatant Commanders and as a collective body can provide joint focus and guidance to Service chiefs for training, organizing and equipping joint forces.

A previous example of a dual-hatted organization not working can be taken from the history of the Joint Forces Command. "The integration of Atlantic fleet and Atlantic Command into one staff had long been considered an undesirable arrangement. It was not possible to combine the functions adequately. Consequently in August 1985, the Secretary of Defense approved separation of Atlantic Command from Atlantic Fleet."\(^8\)

VI. CONCLUSION

This paper examined the influence of the four services on joint operations with a view to recommending evolutionary changes and further modifications to the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act to meet the Congressional objective of "jointness." Evidence has shown that Goldwater-Nichols has not gone far enough to meet the Congressional objective of jointness. What improvements are still necessary to enhance the effectiveness of military operations and improve DOD management and administration? We must move emphasis and budget authority from strong services chiefs to regional CINCs.

The U.S. military places emphasizes on strong services and a command and control system that takes advantage of decentralization, functional responsibility, specialization and professionalism. The evidence presented illustrates that the services continue to train and develop weaponry for their individual service objectives and requirements without strong influence or control from a centralized joint military structure. The services also maintain a close-hold on the service component commanders within the unified commands, preventing the CINCs from becoming the powerful regional warfighters envisioned by the Goldwater-Nichols Act. Continuation of this structure looses the benefits and efficiencies of centralization, geographic distribution of power and the joint perspective.

Superior leadership skills and the talent of military and civilian leaders in the Department of Defense have overcome the weakness of the inadequate organizational structure. Our leadership continues to devise ad-hoc joint arrangements to compensate for the system's structural problems. These arrangements are naturally unstable and depend on the meshing of
personalities. A service chief with statutory responsibilities to develop his service, in times of tight budgets, will be pressured to maintain the capability of his service, at the expense of joint military wide perspective. With continued dual-hattedness at the JCS level and decentralization among service chiefs, we will continue to loose the benefits of centralization at the joint commands and efficient, prioritization and joint decision-making. To meet the Congressional objectives outlined in Goldwater-Nichols and to fully coordinate joint requirements for our armed forces, we need JCS members that have no Service responsibilities. To implement this change will require renewed debate and new Congressional legislation.

As cited previously, with the passage of the Goldwater Nichols Act, Congress sought to correct perceived deficiencies and emphasized a desired shift from individual service autonomy to that of joint operations. To support the new Joint Chiefs, an appropriate realignment of OSD, JCS, and Service Staffs is necessary to provide manpower and support staffs for the new chiefs. Reorganization of the JCS, coupled with budget authority for joint programs, is required for effective joint control over research, development, and acquisition. It is not the intent of this paper to fully analyze the re-alignment required of the DoD staff, but only to frame the issues for further debate.

This changes cited above will allow the CJCS to fully influence programming decisions during the POM cycle with his Chairman’s Program Recommendation and his Chairman’s Program Assessment. Joint control over Service research, development, acquisition, and organizational structures will fully enforce the intent of Goldwater-Nichols Act and improve our joint warfighting efficiency and integration.

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