

UNCLASSIFIED

Security Classification This Page

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

1. Report Security Classification: UNCLASSIFIED			
2. Security Classification Authority:			
3. Declassification/Downgrading Schedule:			
4. Distribution/Availability of Report: DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A: APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE; DISTRIBUTION IS UNLIMITED.			
5. Name of Performing Organization: JOINT MARITIME OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT			
6. Office Symbol: C		7. Address: NAVAL WAR COLLEGE 686 CUSHING ROAD NEWPORT, RI 02841-1207	
8. Title (Include Security Classification): "Walking the Walk" The Final Step to Full Implementation of Goldwater-Nichols			
9. Personal Authors: Robert D. LaBrutta, Major, USAF			
10. Type of Report: FINAL		11. Date of Report: 4 Feb 02	
12. Page Count: 29			
13. Supplementary Notation: A paper submitted to the Faculty of the NWC in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the JMO Department. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the NWC or the Department of the Navy.			
14. Ten key words that relate to your paper: Goldwater-Nichols Act, Command and Control, President of the United States, Secretary of Defense, National Command Authorities, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Supreme Command.			
15. Abstract: "Joint operations" is central to the way the United States employs its armed forces. The structure is a complicated and dynamic rubric that requires U.S. military Services to set aside their self-interests and concentrate on executing military strategy through a unified effort in support of the requirements expressed by the combatant commanders (CINCs). This is the framework Congress envisioned when it passed the Goldwater-Nichols Act (GNA) of 1986. Although vast improvements in unifying the Services have been achieved, many believe that, "Parochialism, not cooperation, remains the watchword despite the common deference to jointness." Consequently, Congress has exhausted its patience with Service rivalries and wants to generate more jointness. This author contends that if Congress truly intends the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) to be lead agent with full responsibility for compliance, then the position must be awarded Supreme Command (SUCOM) over the Armed Forces. This action will provide the CJCS the direct authority he needs to compel the CINCs and Services to take the final step—full implementation of the GNA.			
16. Distribution / Availability of Abstract:	Unclassified	Same As Rpt	DTIC Users
17. Abstract Security Classification: UNCLASSIFIED			
18. Name of Responsible Individual: CHAIRMAN, JOINT MARITIME OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT			
19. Telephone: 841-3556		20. Office Symbol: C	

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
Newport, R.I.

“WALKING THE WALK”

THE FINAL STEP TO FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF GOLDWATER-NICHOLS

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Maritime Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

Signature: SIGNED
4 February 2002

Faculty Adviser: SIGNED
Professor Paul Romanski

Report Documentation Page

Report Date 04 Feb 2002	Report Type N/A	Dates Covered (from... to) -
Title and Subtitle "Walking the Walk" The Final Step to Full Implementation of Goldwater-Nichols	Contract Number	
	Grant Number	
	Program Element Number	
Author(s)	Project Number	
	Task Number	
	Work Unit Number	
Performing Organization Name(s) and Address(es) Joint Military Operations Department Naval War College 686 Cushing Road Newport, RI 02841-1207	Performing Organization Report Number	
Sponsoring/Monitoring Agency Name(s) and Address(es)	Sponsor/Monitor's Acronym(s)	
	Sponsor/Monitor's Report Number(s)	
Distribution/Availability Statement Approved for public release, distribution unlimited		
Supplementary Notes		
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Subject Terms		
Report Classification unclassified	Classification of this page unclassified	

Classification of Abstract unclassified	Limitation of Abstract UU
Number of Pages 30	

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ABSTRACT

"WALKING THE WALK" THE FINAL STEP TO FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF GOLDWATER-NICHOLS

“Joint operations” are central to the way the United States employs its armed forces. The structure is a complicated and dynamic rubric that requires U.S. military Services to set aside their self-interests and concentrate on executing military strategy through a unified effort in support of the requirements expressed by the combatant commanders (CINCs). This is the framework Congress envisioned when it passed the Goldwater-Nichols Act (GNA) of 1986.

Although vast improvements in unifying the Services have been achieved, many believe that, “Parochialism, not cooperation, remains the watchword despite the common deference to jointness.”ⁱ Consequently, Congress has exhausted its patience with Service rivalries and wants to generate more jointness.ⁱⁱ

This author contends that if Congress truly intends the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) to be lead agent with full responsibility for compliance, then the position must be awarded Supreme Command (SUCOM) over the Armed Forces. This action will provide the CJCS the direct authority he needs to compel the CINCs and Services to take the final step—full implementation of the GNA.

ⁱ Douglas A. MacGregor. "A Decade, No Progress," Joint Force Quarterly, Winter 2000-2001: 18.

Introduction

“Joint operations” are central to the way the United States employs its armed forces. The structure is a complicated and dynamic rubric that requires U.S. military Services to set aside their self-interests and concentrate on executing military strategy through a unified effort in support of the requirements expressed by the combatant commanders (CINCs). This is the framework Congress envisioned when it passed the Goldwater-Nichols Act (GNA) of 1986.

Under the GNA, Congress sought to strengthen civilian leadership, clarify the authority and responsibilities of the CINCs, improve strategy formulation and contingency planning, and provide for more efficient use of defense resources.¹ GNA also strengthened the position of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and charged the billet with the ultimate responsibility of institutionalizing a joint/unified warfighting methodology. Moreover, GNA requires the CJCS to provide an overarching framework through which the JCS, Defense Agencies, and the Service components can best support the CINCs.

In the *Naval War College Review*, Mr. James Locher asks whether the Goldwater-Nichols Reorganization Act of 1986 has worked.² There is little doubt that GNA revolutionized the U.S. military system. This new joint organizational framework has demonstrated effectiveness through the overwhelming success of U.S. military forces in the joint and combined arms operations of DESERT STORM, 1991; the Kosovo War, 1999; and in the current War on Terrorism. Although vast improvements in integrating and unifying the Services have been achieved, Congress continues to demand further unified improvements until full implementation of the GNA transformation is considered complete.

ⁱⁱ Robert B. Adolph, Jr., Charles W. Stiles, and Frank D. Hitt, Jr. “Why Goldwater-Nichols Didn’t Go Far

Therefore, an increased emphasis on improving joint operational effectiveness and a thorough understanding of what *Joint Vision 2020* describes as “decisive force, power projection, overseas presence, and strategic agility”³ are the linchpins to the future value of the CINCs’ combat capabilities.

What enhancements must the Defense Department implement in order to meet the full requirements of GNA? This paper will discuss three. First, in order for the CJCS to execute fully the responsibilities of the position mandated by law, Congress must enact new legislation to expand the role of the CJCS to Supreme Commander (SUCOM) of the Armed Forces and appoint the Chairman as a permanent member of the National Security Council (NSC). Second, with his new authority, the CJCS must drive the development of robust, realistic, user-friendly, joint doctrine. Finally, the CJCS must institute overarching joint guidance for the CINCs’ Strategy Document and campaign planning design process.

Other programs that might be impacted by this proposed change in CJCS leadership function—joint education, training, interoperability, and budget/resourcing—are beyond the scope of this paper and will not be addressed.

Goldwater-Nichols—Historical Perspective

“Separate ground, sea, and air warfare is gone forever. If ever again we should be involved in war, we will fight in all elements, with all services, as one single concentrated effort.”⁴ Dwight D. Eisenhower

“Since the end of World War II, Congress has taken significant measures to unify the Armed Forces of the United States. The National Security Act of 1947 marked the beginning of the unification trend.”⁵ Congress continued the evolutionary process by passing the 1949 and 1958 amendments. Over the course of the next 28 years, Congress instituted numerous commissions and amendments in order to drive the Defense Department toward making

Enough,” *Joint Force Quarterly*, Spring 1995, 42.

President Eisenhower's vision of a unified, joint military organization a reality.

Unfortunately, through the early 1980s, substantial inter-Service rivalry, excessive parochialism, and watered-down military advice by senior military officers to the U.S. civilian leadership occurred in epic proportions and underwrote numerous military failures. Examples include: the Bay of Pigs blunder, 1961; the Vietnam War, 1965-1975; the failed Iran hostage rescue attempt, 1979; the Marine Barracks bombing in Lebanon, 1983; and successful, yet highly flawed, rescue of American students during Operation URGENT FURY, 1983—painful events that drove Congress to act.

Understanding that sweeping improvements to the defense establishment needed to be made, Congress passed the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986. This Act is possibly the most extensive and revolutionary U.S. Defense Department overhaul since implementation of the 1947 National Security Act. It also moved the military establishment further toward a unified structure.⁶ However, although GNA forced significant progress in the military's joint-warfighting capabilities, some argue that additional modifications are necessary to meet the full transformational mandate required by law.

It appears clear that Congress has exhausted its patience with Service rivalries and wants to generate more jointness by shifting power away from proponents of separate operations.⁷ Therefore, because Congress will continue to press for more improvements in unified operations, the question is not whether the Defense Department should continue down that road. Instead, it must decide how it can effectively take the final step to full implementation of the GNA.

In order for Congress to move the CINCs and Services toward the final transition, one of two alternatives must be enacted by law. Either Congress must abolish the “separate”

Service organizational construct and establish a single, Combined Military Service. Or, Congress must increase the formal authority of the CJCS.

This author sides with those who believe that dismantling the current system and merging the Services into a combined force is a bad idea. The strength of the U.S. military system lies in the fact that each branch brings different functions, capabilities, and unique strengths to this instrument of power. Additionally, enacting such a radical change to the current structure would cause a massive reorganization, result in enormous costs, and cause a huge amount of disruption to military operations. Therefore, this author believes the integrity of the separate Services should be retained, and recommends the more reasonable approach. Specifically, Congress should authorize the CJCS SUCOM of the Armed Forces and award the Chairman a permanent seat on the NSC.

Establishing Centralized “Military” Command and Control

“Command is central to all military action, and unity of command (a principle of war) is central to unity of effort.”⁸ General Henry H. Shelton

The GNA significantly strengthened the position of the CJCS by making the incumbent senior military advisor to the NCA. However, “if there is fault in the 1986 G-N Act, it lies in not having gone far enough.”⁹ The GNA vested the CJCS with huge responsibilities for the strategic direction of the armed forces, strategic and contingency planning, advice to the Secretary of Defense (SecDef) on military requirements, programs, and budgets, and development of joint doctrine, training, and education of the Armed Forces. Unfortunately, Congress stopped short of fully empowering the Chairman with formal authority to fulfill the broad responsibilities levied on the position.

Specifically, although classified as the senior military advisor to the President and the SecDef, the Chairman carries no “command” authority over the CINCs or the members of

the JCS. Like the SecDefs prior to the 1958 amendment that strengthened the position, the CJCS's only source of power and authority comes from the force of his personality and through the relationship developed with the NCA. “Central military control is weak because both Congress and the individual services have historically wanted it weak. Were a strong system of centralized military control to exist, jointness could occur and unified military strategy would be possible.”¹⁰

Since Unity of Command is a key Principle of War, it is disconcerting that the most senior military advisor to the NCA is not in the direct chain of command of the military organizational structure. Cautionary concerns about vesting control of the military under a single Supreme Commander have been expressed over the years by Presidents, members of Congress, Service Secretaries, and senior officers. However, doing so might promote lasting benefits to the CINCs as well as to U.S. national defense posture.

Clear, Unfragmented Chain of Command. “The primary emphasis in command relations should be to keep the chain of command short and simple so that it is clear who is in charge and of what.”¹¹ Under current GNA provisions, the CJCS is the conduit through which communication is supposed to pass from the CINCs and JCS to the NCA. However, the position is not in the direct command chain, which leads to confusion. Moreover, because the CJCS is not in the formal chain of command, he does not hold directive authority so he cannot insist the CINCs or Service Chiefs execute a particular course of action—he must persuade them.

In his book *Waging Modern War*, General Wesley Clark (former SACEUR) discussed his frustration with what he termed a muddled command and control structure. A notable passage dealt with the contentious issue of introducing Apache helicopters into the

theater of operations in Kosovo. According to Clark, he had numerous heated debates with General Hugh Shelton (CJCS) and the Service Chiefs about the importance of deploying the deep-attack gun ships as part of his arsenal. A number of JCS members, in particular General Reimer (Army Chief of Staff), did not agree and made their positions known to Shelton and SecDef Cohen. Shelton too held reservations about the feasibility and high risks involved in their employment. However, through Clark's incessant demands and his plea that the CJCS and Service Chiefs "surely would not deny a wartime commander in chief the assets we need to win,"¹² Shelton acquiesced and the SecDef supported Clark's request.

The problem in this sequence is not that Clark won approval for his request, nor that he pushed hard to gain support for the assets he felt were necessary to conduct the mission—that was his obligation as a war-fighting CINC. Instead, what is of great concern is Clark's assertion that the decision was made by "committee." In Clark's words,

"The Chiefs seemed to collectively have great power. Perhaps this derived from the White House's reluctance to go against the Chiefs—though at least one member of the Chiefs vigorously opposed the operation—or perhaps it was the way the SecDef or the CJCS preferred to use the Chiefs to buffer and analyze field advice. For whatever reason, there appeared to be a far higher degree of "leadership by committee" than existing U.S. legislation requires."¹³

A major reason Congress passed the GNA was, "they wanted to make sure good, clear, crisp, comprehensive military advice and recommendations were being given. And they wanted to change the system whereby a committee—the Joint Chiefs—tended, they felt, to offer the least common denominator advice."¹⁴ If Clark's interpretation is accurate, or there is even a perception that military decisions are still being made by committee, it is in direct violation of the GNA. Moreover, it is an indication that the command and control structure should be further modified. Specifically, in theater military operational issues of this nature, it is this author's position that the SecDef does not need to be involved. As

President Bush recently stated, the NCA sets the strategy—Generals run the war.¹⁵

Therefore, in support of the President's position, Congress must amend GNA to place formal decision-making authority regarding military operational decisions in the hands of the CJCS. With SUCOM, Shelton might have made a command decision not to support Clark's request for the Apaches. Conversely, if Shelton believed that the Apaches were required, he could have made the decision to introduce those assets without having to confer with the SecDef.

What would be gained? Awarding SUCOM to the CJCS would strengthen the chain of command, support the tenets of centralized control and decentralized execution, and eliminate any perceived gray area in the CINC-CJCS-Service Chief relationship. Moreover, the CJCS could make direct, clear-cut theater-operational decisions in a more spontaneous manner without having to defer those decisions to the SecDef.

CINCs' Span of Control. Current legislation vests command authority directly in the hands of the CINCs. However, some suggest that today's diverse, multinational, technologically driven environment may be so overly complex that it spreads the CINCs' span of control too thin. During DESERT STORM, General Schwarzkopf was the first of the modern CINCs with this vast amount of authority during war. His duties included working high-level policy and theater strategic issues with SecDef and CJCS; making daily touch with the Saudis, British, French, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and all the rest; supervising the air war's planning and execution; and dealing with the myriad media requirements.¹⁶ Additionally, since he dual-hatted himself as the land forces component commander, he maintained control over that instrumental portion of the campaign as well. In a stinging article published in the October 1993 *Naval Institute Proceedings*, General John Cushman criticized Schwarzkopf specifically because he overextended his effective capacity. Cushman argued that because

Schwarzkopf's attention may have been concentrated elsewhere, "the failure to destroy Iraq's Republican Guard might have been in large part due to the CINC's lack of good sense of what was happening on the battlefield."¹⁷

Under the precept of centralized control and decentralized execution, this paper does not advocate that Congress eliminate COCOM from the CINCs. However, it is argued that inculcating the CJCS into the formal chain of command may alleviate CINCs from some of the strategic-operational and political-military requirements currently prescribed in their duty descriptions. In essence, if General Powell had SUCOM during DESERT STORM, he could have taken on CINC-functional responsibilities (e.g., dealing with the Saudi, Brits, and the media, etc.) so that Schwarzkopf could have placed more focus on the war-fighting and war-termination aspects of his job.

Another controversial issue regarding the strains placed on the CINC's span of control have surfaced during the War on Terrorism. Many traditionalists, including this author, have criticized General Tommy Franks (CINCCENT) decision to run the war from his headquarters building in Tampa, Florida, rather than deploying closer to the action. Although not the only reason for communication problems experienced in the early phases of the war, pundits argue that the distances involved in this trans-world command and control structure have caused unnecessary delays in critical, time-sensitive decisions. For instance, on at least ten occasions, Air Force pilots believed they had top Taliban and al Qaeda members in their cross hairs but could not secure approval to fire in time to strike. Since targeting finalization is at the CINC/JTF level, the process was too slow to be effective to clear the pilots to execute the mission.¹⁸ Several officials claimed the core of the problem was the location of the CINC. Because Franks decided to retain final approval of targeting

decisions, some believe he could have eliminated the communications gap and significantly shortened the targeting decision time-line by moving his headquarters closer to Afghanistan.

Another compelling aspect to the argument that General Franks should have been nearer to the AOR is that having the four-star in country would have enhanced morale and provided a boost to the troops who actually took the fight to the Taliban and al Qaeda.

FM 100-5, *Tentative Field Service Regulation Operations*, written in 1939, discussed the inseparability of command and leadership. It also discussed the commander's responsibilities to his command in the physical and moral domains. Specifically,

“In the exercise of his command functions, the commander should keep in close touch with all subordinate units by means of personal visits and observation. The personal influence of the command on the troops is of the utmost importance...he must be near his troops when they are engaged in combat.”¹⁹

Emphasis on this point is taken further by the refined German doctrine entitled *Truppenfuehrung* (Command of Troops), which reflected the importance of front-line senior level leadership: "Personal influence by the commanding officer of these troops is of the greatest importance. He must be located near the fighting troops."²⁰ This is especially true if there are setbacks, or when an operational or tactical mission fails.

When addressing generalship in the next century, Chris Bellamy in *The Evolution of Modern Land Warfare* states that the commander must be forward:

“Senior commanders will have to move and disperse more widely and more frequently than before. The commander will have to share danger, stress, and physical privation with his/her subordinates and do so for an extended, unforeseeable period. This will place high demands on the commander’s physical toughness and powers of personal leadership greater than the recent past.”²¹

Moreover, whether it is labeled as Rommel’s “sixth sense,” or Clausewitz’s “coup d’oeil,” General Franks’ boots on the ground would allow him to obtain operational mastery of the situation by way of personal interaction with his subordinate commanders at the front that he

could not obtain otherwise.²²

Some senior officials disagree with this position. They believe that a modern CINC does not have to deploy to the area of operations in order to be effective. They base their argument on the fact that today's commanders are provided "24/7" situational awareness and have all the tools they need to manage a war from long range.²³ This is due to the significant advances in intelligence technology and the incredible leap in the telecommunications support network. As Franks indicated, "a new way of war seems to be emerging, built around high-speed communications that control long-range strikes using precise munitions, which themselves rely heavily on new information technologies."²⁴ An Army general agreed and stated that Franks correctly understood his role to be more strategic than tactical—"Generals need to be architects of institutional systems and allocators of resources."²⁵

Perhaps there is not an absolute right answer to this debate because of dependence on circumstance. Certainly, General Franks proved to be effective and has performed magnificently thus far. However, it is this author's contention that once hostilities in a region escalate to combat—it is incumbent on the CINC to change his priority and focus the command's entire effort on shaping the battle and winning the war. Moreover, it is imperative on the command and control system to provide the CINC that opportunity—by establishing a mechanism to relieve him of his engagement responsibilities.

Again, this paper advocates that by inserting the CJCS into the formal chain of command, combatant commanders may be relieved of those broad, peacetime theater strategic requirements. This action could enable the CINCs greater flexibility, free them to deploy their central headquarters closer to the action, and allow them full capacity to concentrate their entire effort on conducting the war.

Check and Balance on SecDef's Power. A prevailing tenet of the U.S. Constitution is civilian control of the military. However, this edict does not and should not denigrate the essential contributions of the senior military leaders to U.S. defense and foreign policy deliberations.²⁶ In order to place full authority in the CJCS as the Supreme Commander and to ensure the President hears his advice, Congress must also mandate that the Chairman be awarded a permanent seat on the National Security Council. As it stands, GNA states, “subject to the discretion of the President, the Chairman may participate in NSC meetings.”²⁷ A potential concern with this set up is that if a CJCS is not invited to attend NSC meetings, he can be completely shut out of a decision making process that includes military matters.

History is replete with redundant examples of how the CJCS—for that matter, the entire JCS—were not consulted about strategic and operational military matters. During his tenure, President Kennedy lost faith in the military because of the Bay of Pigs operation and the crisis in Laos. Therefore, he used almost exclusively a small civilian personal planning staff during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The military was thereafter on the periphery of the decision making process.²⁸

President Lyndon Johnson’s administration took this scenario to the extreme. “Pentagon civilians under McNamara insinuated themselves directly into all manner of operational details regarding the planning and execution of U.S. air strikes in Vietnam and nearly shut out the body of the JCS.”²⁹ Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, was intent on filling the role as the President's preeminent advisor on all defense-related matters. Thus, the JCS was frozen out of the policy-making councils of the Johnson Administration.³⁰ In his book *Derelection of Duty*, H.R. McMaster observes,

“McNamara was moving to sever all channels of communication between the

JCS and the president. The defense secretary's position with the president depended on his control of information and advice on military matters, and he was determined to prevent the JCS from undermining his influence. McNamara sent the president only those assessments that supported his conception of prosecuting the conflict in Vietnam."³¹

This was a clear violation of the check and balance civil-military relationship that is established by law and “exists in every democratic society.”³² In this author's opinion, Secretary McNamara abused his power. Moreover, his actions—combined with a relatively weak Joint Chiefs—caused a major breach in the system and led the U.S. into a perilous situation.

Current U.S. civil-military relations on balance do not present a threatening situation. However, this author argues that under the current structure, there is still excessive power held in the office of the Secretary of Defense—left unchecked, the same kind of transgression that transpired during Vietnam could occur in the future. Therefore, to ensure that the President hears from his senior military leader on all matters of national importance, Congress must strengthen CJCS authority and also pass additional legislation that commissions the CJCS as a permanent member of the NSC.

Of course, there are those who will express concerns that providing this expanded authority to the CJCS would shut down communication channels with the CINCs and JCS and further threaten civilian control of the military. To those opponents, this paper offers the words of General Powell, “The most junior officer in the Armed Forces of the U.S. is entitled to express disagreement through channels to the next higher authority.”³³ Therefore, CINCs and the JCS will still be provided the avenue to express their opinions to the NCA should they disagree with a decision made by the CJCS. Moreover, because “The checks and balances required to control the power of the military are already imbued in the organizational and leadership culture itself”³⁴ and the CJCS will continue to report to the

SecDef—civilian control over the military will remain unchanged. When asked who is ultimately in charge of the military, Powell responded as would any military officer in his position, "there is no doubt in my mind that the SecDef is in charge."³⁵

Once the Chairman is awarded SUCOM and a permanent seat in the NSC, he will be armed with a clear mandate in support of the NCA to lead and direct the military Services toward final implementation of the joint provisions expressed by GNA and expected by Congress. The first area that requires rigor and the direct influence of the CJCS is the development and execution of effective joint doctrine.

Instituting Robust, Realistic Joint Doctrine

"The ultimate promise of our doctrine is its potential to accomplish the mission, achieve the war fighter's objectives, and not insignificantly, to save lives on the battlefield."³⁶ General Ronald R. Fogleman, USAF

Joint Doctrine must be designed, developed, and institutionalized to take precedence and "unequivocal primacy" over the doctrine of the independent component Services.³⁷ Currently it does not.

Although the CJCS is responsible for joint doctrine development, one might argue that he does not have the authority or the resources at his disposal to accomplish this task. Therefore, doctrine development has been subcontracted to the Service components. Moreover, because the CJCS has no "lever" to mandate the Services to come together, parochialism is often too powerful, and the Service functional specialists charged with preparing a "unified" construct fall short because they cannot "negotiate" a joint perspective. Unfortunately, what is developed and issued from the current arrangement is a beautifully bound, theoretical show case, but still independent-Service oriented and very cumbersome, unrealistic, and unenforceable.

As Douglas McGregor stated in his article *A Decade, No Progress*, because the development of doctrine has been often relegated by the Services to secondary status, “Joint Visions 2010 and 2020 are simply bumper stickers for single-service programs and do not prevent competing service requirements from dominating joint integration efforts.”³⁸ This has to change! There is little doubt that in order to defend the United States from future threats, to protect U.S. allies and national interests at home and abroad, and in order for the military instrument successfully to wage and win wars, the Defense Department requires the closest integration of air, ground, coastal defense, and maritime forces. Therefore, “our nation’s leaders must realize that the development of an overarching doctrine will be required for a new way of defending and fighting—it’s not a matter of turf.”³⁹

Quite simply, writing joint doctrine is too important to be relegated to the Services. It is the foundation for effective joint training and therefore the basis for joint readiness. If written properly, joint doctrine can become a powerful instrument that clarifies the operational art of war. If that happens, doctrine might then become the set of playbooks U.S. component commanders could employ to return to the fundamental principles of attaining victory in war. If Congress truly intends the CJCS to be lead agent with full responsibility for compliance, then the position must be awarded the direct authority through SUCOM to compel the CINCs and Services fully to focus, invest, and contribute their best and brightest officers in this endeavor.

Some may argue that doctrine is not important and is therefore not necessary. For instance, because its culture is based on ingenuity and flexibility, “the U.S. Navy does not have substantial joint, campaign-level doctrine that dovetails with the air-land battle doctrine of the U.S. Army and Air Force.”⁴⁰ However, there is a danger in this philosophy. “If

flexibility of action is overly stressed, then we suffer the risk that the behavior of the armed forces in combat will be disunited, incoherent, even chaotic. Moreover, a proclaimed national military doctrine that sets forth terms for going to war has remarkably powerful stabilizing and unifying value."⁴¹

A cohesive force functions as a unified, interconnected system. Properly constructed, doctrine's power comes from united thought and action, and cooperative activity in which all know their own tasks as well as those of their nearer neighbors. Accordingly, the joint military instrument of national power must institute an overarching set of doctrine as a "coherent body of thought."⁴² The new doctrine must define how joint operations will integrate Service-provided forces, how joint commanders will conduct those operations—in essence, it should define the operational art of war. This is what Congress intended and has specified in the GNA. That goal can only be realized if all Service components make it a priority, are actively involved, and are inspirationally led by a CJCS who is given formal authority to control the entire process.

Clear Course of Action on CINC Strategy and Campaign Planning

"Unity of effort among the Military Services at the national level is obtained from the authority of the President and SecDef, by the strategic planning of the CJCS, and by cross-Service efforts by the CINCs and Military Departments."⁴³ General Henry H. Shelton

Washington-level policy and strategy documents (National Security Strategy, National Military Strategy, the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP), etc.) establish the basic conceptual guidance that assists the CINCs in developing assessments, strategies, and campaign plans for theaters of operation.⁴⁴ The CJCS, who by law is required to develop fiscally constrained, forward-looking, fully integrated strategic and contingency plans, transmits the information.⁴⁵ Since the Chairman has broad oversight responsibility and he

also produces the JSCP, one might assume that there would be binding guidance on a CINC's strategy and campaign-planning documents.

While there is reference to the CINCs' strategies and campaign planning that run through a number of joint doctrine publications, there is no specific guidance. There is nothing that specifies what a CINC's strategy and campaign plans might look like, how they should be kept current, who might review (indeed, approve) them, or what the elements of a basic template might look like.⁴⁶ Not only that, but the approving authority for a CINC's strategy document—is the CINC. Again it appears that because Congress did not grant the CJCS formal authority over the matter, the CINCs have not invested time or effort in developing a framework for their strategies. Nor have they designed a standardized set of guidelines that would outline procedures for this critical yet nebulous area of responsibility.

Over the years there has been great debate regarding where there is an actual need for the CINC's Strategy Documents. In their article entitled *The CINCs' Strategies: The Combatant Command Process*, Mendel and Turbivile outline the following reasons why the CINC's Strategy Document is important:⁴⁷

- A strategy provides a CINC's vision and guidance for myriad activities that protect US interests within geographic or functional AORs.
- Because of the way the United States has organized its joint forces under the COCOM of CINCs, a strategy is needed to integrate the many US and multilateral regional activities involved.
- A strategy can be useful in pulling together the US interagency cooperation and supporting requirements a CINC often will need for mission success.
- CINC's strategies are critically necessary as a basis for cooperation among the combatant commands. The doctrinal imperatives of "supporting to supported" relationships suggest that CINCTRANS would benefit from ready access to the CINCCENT and CINCPAC strategies.
- A complete set of strategies would be useful to the Joint Staff and Service staffs

as a way of accessing the current strategic concepts of the combatant commanders.

The bottom line is that CINC strategy documents are essentially the commander's intent regarding the strategic and operational geopolitical/military issues in the theater. Without this vision statement—all plans, initiatives, and courses of action are without merit. What was surprising to learn through this author's research is that each CINC staff works from an entirely different rule set, and each uses a wide variety of products to develop military strategy and campaign plans. If not addressed, there is a potential that this inter-CINC systems divergence could become a restraint and may have a destabilizing effect on the operational preparedness of a region.

For instance, if staff members from a supporting AOR are required to augment a supported CINC staff in a different AOR, they will experience a time-consuming "learning curve" to assimilate the new methods, procedures, and ROE for developing the same kinds of products—OPLANs, CONPLANs, and Warning Orders. Does this make sense? Not only does such a disconnect slow down the strategy development/campaign planning process—it also impedes the mission of the tactical level commanders who are waiting on the CINC's intent, estimate of the situation, and course of action in order to execute missions at their level.

Some might argue that a consolidated framework to develop a CINC's strategy document and campaign plans already exists through the establishment of Theater Engagement Plan (TEP) process. "In 1997, the CJCS directed the CINCs to formally link their regional operational engagement activities with the national strategic objectives by developing peacetime theater engagement plans."⁴⁸

Unfortunately, although TEPs have institutionalized the CJCS to CINC process, they

do not meet the standard this author prescribes above. First, TEPs are required but there is no overarching doctrine that describes how a planner should initiate obtaining the information required to be placed in the product. Second, there is no guidance regarding how a planner should design the TEP to be responsive to CINC needs. Third, there is no requirement for the TEPs to be thoroughly assessed (only reviewed) by the CJCS on a comparative basis to make sure all the CINC TEPs meet the appropriate standards. Fourth, although TEPs are required for the peacetime engagement portion of the CINCs' mission requirements—TEPs are not formulated to shape their warfighting capabilities and plans.

This author advocates that the different CINC strategy and campaign planning methodologies must be consolidated, streamlined, and packaged into a standardized process that can be used as guidance by any of the planning staffs. These “how to” manuals could then be taken off the shelf and utilized as the basic starting points for CINC strategy or campaign planning development regardless of the planner's experience level. Because the CJCS has the overall responsibility for the joint strategy and planning processes—this author contends he needs the formal authority of SUCOM to mandate advancements in this area. Moreover, since the TEP process is already established and requires only minor refinements—the CJCS could direct that the TEP process serve as the vehicle to design/implement a coherent system of CINC strategy document and campaign planning development.

An Opposing View

In a telephone interview of January 14, 2002, General Joseph Ralston (current SACEUR) stated his disagreement with this author's proposal of awarding SUCOM to the CJCS. General Ralston believes that the Chairman's position already carries enough

authority to execute the duties of the office required by law. Additionally, he pointed out two potential pitfalls with this author's position. First, as a former VCJCS, General Ralston knows first hand the demands already placed on the Chairman. He indicated that the CJCS expends an enormous amount of time and effort working on the broad range of political-military, strategic-level issues directly with the many Beltway agencies (SecDef, SecState, CIA, DIA, etc.), in order to fulfill his highest priority—formulating and providing the best possible advice to the NCA. Loading the position down further with command authority over nine CINCs and four members of the JCS could potentially overwhelm the individual sitting in the position. Second, he expressed that placing the Service Chiefs under the direct control of the CJCS might further dilute the span of control and influence of the Service Secretaries. Some could consider this a violation of the sacrosanct tenet of civilian control of the military.

While respecting General Ralston's viewpoint and concerns about this proposal—the author argues that this SUCOM recommendation does have merit. In fact, the proposed change in legislation is necessary and might actually work in the Chairman's favor, although including command authority in the CJCS job description might cause an increase in the Chairman's workload. However, there is also a chance that providing the Chairman formal authority to direct the CINCs and JCS toward programs he believes take priority could actually streamline decisions. Additionally, as the recognized boss, the initiatives he assigns to the CINCs and JCS will take on a higher priority than they do when he is using the “force of his personality” alone.

Regarding the issue of whether this SUCOM proposal would further diminish the role of the Service Secretaries, again this author respectfully disagrees. As Deputy Secretary of

Defense White stated, “there were some who believed GNA devalued service contributions to combat capability and too severely restricted their roles. In fact, the law defined and enhanced the value of the services by focusing them on their core competencies which involve delivering combat capability to the CINCs.”⁴⁹ Furthermore, this proposal would not limit, change, or delete any portion of the administrative control (ADCON) and authority the Service Secretaries currently maintain over their Services Chiefs' train, plan, equip, and support missions.

Conclusion

The GNA was the catalyst for many significant improvements in U.S. senior military decision-making, and played a major role in the transformation of the Department of Defense. However, there is clearly still more work to be accomplished in order to move the military establishment to the final phase of jointness. Although GNA increased the responsibilities placed in the job description of the CJCS, it gave the Chairman "No authority under the act—he was given a role. What the Chairman ultimately possesses is influence, not authority, and only the influence which the SecDef gives him.”⁵⁰ Further, many believe that, “Parochialism, not cooperation, remains the watchword despite the common deference to jointness.”⁵¹

The basic challenges of command and control, joint doctrine development, and formulating CINC strategy document and campaign planning guidance can only be met by moving away from parochial Service interests. To accomplish these tasks, Congress must pass legislation that awards the CJCS SUCOM authority over the Armed Forces and appoints him a permanent member of the NSC. In essence, instead of the military establishment just “talking the talk” of joint/unified operations, the Chairman would have the authority to

mandate that it “walk the walk.”

END NOTES

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- ² James R. Locher, III, "Has it Worked? The Goldwater-Nichols Act," Naval War College Review (Newport, RI, Autumn 2001), 95.
- ³ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Vision 2020 (Washington, D.C., 30 May 2000).
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- ⁵ Lovelace, vii.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.
- ⁷ Robert B. Adolph, Jr., Charles W. Stiles, and Franklin D. Hitt, Jr. "Why Goldwater-Nichols Didn't Go Far Enough," Joint Force Quarterly (Spring 1995), 42.
- ⁸ Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)," Joint Publication 0-2 (Washington, D.C., 10 July 2001), x.
- ⁹ Adolph, et. al., 48.
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- ²¹ Chris Bellamy. The Evolution of Modern Land Warfare: Theory and Practice (New York: Routledge, 1990), 268; quoted in Ware, 34.
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- ²³ Thomas E. Ricks, "A War That's Commanded At A Distance," Washington Post (27 December 2001), A16.
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- ²⁵ *Ibid.*
- ²⁶ James P. Martin. "The Joint Chiefs of Staff: Caught in the Middle?" U.S. Army War College (Carlisle Barracks, PA, U.S. Army War College, 8 May 1999), 30.
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- ²⁹ Benjamin S. Lambeth. The Transformation of American Air Power (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2000), 31.
- ³⁰ Martin, 25.
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