

CHAPTER 9

NATIONAL SECURITY AND THE INTERAGENCY PROCESS: FORWARD INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

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Power is the capacity to direct the decisions and actions of others. Power derives from strength and will. Strength comes from the transformation of resources into capabilities. Will infuses objectives with resolve. Strategy marshals capabilities and brings them to bear with precision. Statecraft seeks through strategy to magnify the mass, relevance, impact, and irresistibility of power. It guides the ways the state deploys and applies its power abroad. These ways embrace the arts of war, espionage, and diplomacy. The practitioners of these three arts are the paladins of statecraft.¹

Chas W. Freeman, Jr.

The military is the hammer in America's foreign policy toolbox. And it is a very powerful hammer. But not every problem we face is a nail².

General Henry H. Shelton

THE INTERAGENCY PROCESS AND PURPOSEFUL ADAPTATION.

Ambassador Chas. W. Freeman, Jr. speaks to the skillful use of influence and power to promote the national interests in a competitive world. General Shelton admonishes about the limits of military power. The effective use of power in all of its variants is a tall order even for the United States, the only fully equipped, globally deployed, interagency superpower. The United States is the indispensable anchor of international order and the increasingly globalized economic system. Nothing quite like it has ever existed. Indeed such great powers as Rome, Byzantium, China, Spain, England, and France achieved extraordinary sophistication, enormous institutional and cultural influence, and longevity, but they never achieved the full articulation of America's global reach.

Today the United States forward deploys some 250 diplomatic missions in the form of embassies, consulates, and specialized organizations. It possesses a unified military command system that covers all regions of the world and even outer space. It is the leader of an interlocking set of alliances and agreements that promotes peace, open trade, the principles of democracy, human rights, and protection of the environment. American capital, technology, and culture influence the globe. American power and influence is pervasive and multidimensional. All the instruments of national power are deployed. Yet the challenge of strategic integration, of bringing the instruments into coherent effectiveness, remains. Presidents and their national security staffs strive to achieve coherence, with varying levels of success through use of the "interagency process."

The American interagency decision making process is unique in character, size and complexity. Given ever expanding responsibilities and declining resources in dollars and manpower, it is imperative that national security professionals master it in order to work effectively within it. The complex challenges to national security in the twenty-first century will require intelligent integration of resources and unity of effort within the government.

The United States first faced the challenge of strategic integration within an embryonic interagency process during World War II. Mobilizing the nation and the government for war and winning the peace highlighted the importance of resources and budgets, of integrating diplomacy with military power, gathering and analyzing enormous quantities of intelligence, conducting joint and combined military operations, and managing coalition strategies and balancing competing regional priorities, for example, the European versus the Pacific theater in national strategy. From the war and the onset of the Cold War emerged a number of institutional innovations. Among them: the structure of the modern Department of State, Department of Defense (from the old War Department), a centralized intelligence system, the Marshall Plan, the unified military command system, the Air Force, the predecessor of the U.S. Agency for International Development (Point Four), NATO and other alliances, the military assistance pacts, military advisory groups, and the United States Information Agency.

There is probably no period in American history like the late 1940s and early 1950s that is so formative of the kind of national and institutional learning that John P. Lovell calls "purposeful adaptation." He defines it as "the need to develop and pursue foreign policy goals that are sensitive to national needs and aspirations and to the realities of a changing world environment."³ The evolution of the interagency process parallels America's purposeful adaptation to changing global realities of the last five decades. But it is not an orderly evolution because of serious structural and cultural impediments, such as poor institutional memory.⁴ Prominent historical markers along this path included such documents as NSC 68, the intellectual framework for the containment strategy against the Soviet Union. Though a different type of document, the Weinberger Doctrine articulated criteria for the use of military power that dramatically influenced the shape of American strategy in the 1980s and 1990s.

In 1945, American statesmen faced three challenges: forging a system of collective security, promoting decolonization, and building a stable international financial order. These and four decades of intense threat from the other superpower had a decisive impact on shaping the interagency process. With the end of bipolar ideological and geopolitical conflict, the foreign policy and defense agenda is captured by free trade, democratization, sub-national ethnic and religious conflict, failing states, humanitarian contingencies, ecological deterioration, terrorism, international organized crime, drug trafficking, and the proliferation of the technology of weapons of mass destruction. At the dawn of a new era, is the policy making system developed and refined for the strategic imperatives of the Cold War adequate to meet a very different set of challenges?

THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL: COORDINATION VS. POLICYMAKING.

To bring strategic coherence, consensus, and decisiveness to burgeoning global responsibilities, the National Security Act of 1947 created the National Security Council. Its functions:

“The function of the Council shall be to advise the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to the national security so as to enable the military services and the other departments and agencies of the Government to cooperate more effectively in matters involving the national security.”

“...other functions the President may direct for the purpose of more effectively coordinating the policies and functions of the departments and agencies of the Government relating to the nations security...”

“...assess and appraise the objectives, commitments, and risks of the United States...”

“...consider policies on matters of common interest to the departments and agencies of the Government concerned with the national security...”

The statutory members are the President, the Vice President, Secretaries of State and Defense. All others present are advisors: Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Director Central Intelligence, and cabinet members. The Council need not convene formally to function. Indeed, by late 1999 the Clinton NSC had met only once: March 2, 1993. There are alternatives to formal meetings, such as the ABC luncheons of Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Secretary of Defense William Cohen, and Sandy Berger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, or the Deputies breakfasts and lunches. The “NSC system” of policy coordination and integration operates 24 hours a day. The Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs directs the staff. The emergence of the modern “operational presidency,”⁵ brought to the National Security Council greater authority over the development and implementation of policy, thus creating a new power center that competes for jurisdiction with the Departments of State and Defense.

The National Security Council staff, known as the Executive Secretariat, has varied in size and function. In 1999 the staff comprised about 208 (of which 101 were policy personnel and 107 administrative and support personnel) professionals covering regional and functional responsibilities. Staffers are detailed from the diplomatic corps, the intelligence community, the civil service, the military services (12 in policy positions in September 1999), academia and the private sector. The staffing procedures are personalized by the President's style and comfort level. The structure of the staff, its internal and external functioning, and the degree of centralized control of policy varies. Carter and Clinton have been very centralized, Reagan and Bush less so. The first two Presidential Decision Directives of the Clinton Administration, dated January 20, 1993, set forth the structure and function of the NSC staff and groups that report to it, as depicted below:

National Security Council System

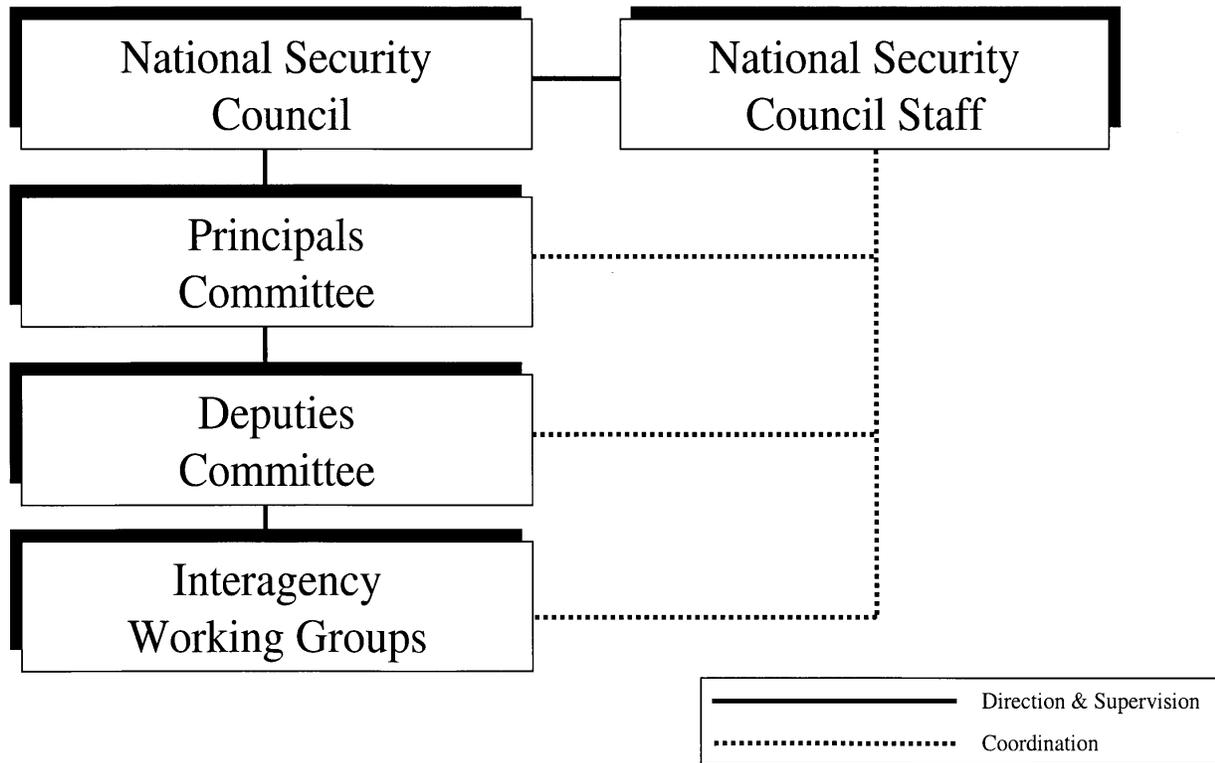


Figure 1. National Security Council System.

The Principals Committee members are the cabinet level representatives who comprise the senior forum for national security issues. The Deputies Committee consists of under secretaries who monitor the work of the interagency policy formulation and articulation process, do crisis management, and when necessary, push unresolved issues to the Principals for resolution. Interagency Working Groups (IWGs) are the heart and soul of the process. They may be *ad hoc*, standing, regional or functional. They function at a number of levels, meet regularly to assess routine and crisis issues, frame policy responses, and build consensus across the government for unified action. The fluid nature of the process means that IWGs do not always have to come to decisions. The system prefers that issues be decided at the lowest level possible. If issues are not resolved there, they are elevated to the next level and when appropriate, to the Deputies Committee. Who chairs the different IWGs and committees can vary between the NSC director and a senior State Department official.

The day-to-day policy coordination and integration is done by the National Security Council Staff, divided into functional and geographic directorates:

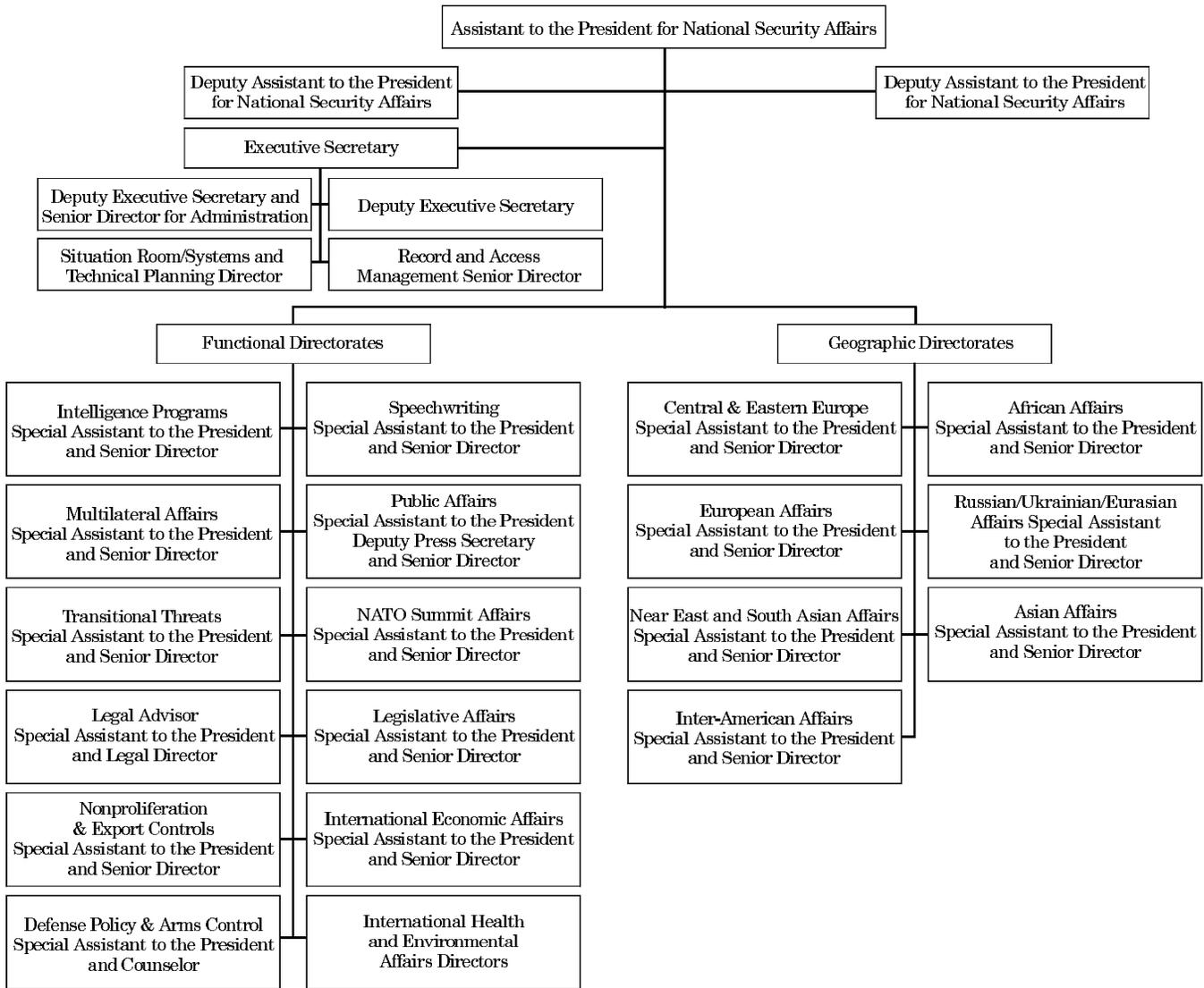


Figure 2. National Security Council Staff.

Policy is often made in different and subtle ways. Anthony Lake, writing in *Somoza Falling: The Nicaraguan Dilemma, A Portrait of Washington At Work*, discusses how the answer to an important letter can help set policy. Hence, the importance of interagency coordination and the importance of being the one (bureau, office, agency) that drafts it.

"...policy flows as much from work on specific items – like the letter from [Venezuelan President Carlos Andres] Perez [to Carter] – as it does from the large, formal inter-agency 'policy reviews' that result in presidential pronouncements."⁶

Each action is precedent for future actions. Speeches, press conferences, VIP visits, and presidential travels are important. Lake elaborates:

"Policy is made on the fly; it emerges from the pattern of specific decisions. Its wisdom is decided by whether you have some vision of what you want, a conceptual thread as you go along."⁷

The NSC staff does the daily and long-term coordination and integration of foreign policy and national security matters across the vast government. Specifically, it:

1. Provides information and policy advice to the President
2. Manages the policy coordination process
3. Monitors implementation of presidential policy decisions
4. Manages the interdepartmental dimensions of crises
5. Articulates the President's policies
6. Undertakes long term strategic planning
7. Conducts liaison with Congress and foreign governments
8. Coordinates summit meetings and national security related trips

There is a natural tension between the policy coordination function of the NSC and policymaking. Jimmy Carter's Director of Latin American Affairs at the NSC, Robert Pastor, argues that:

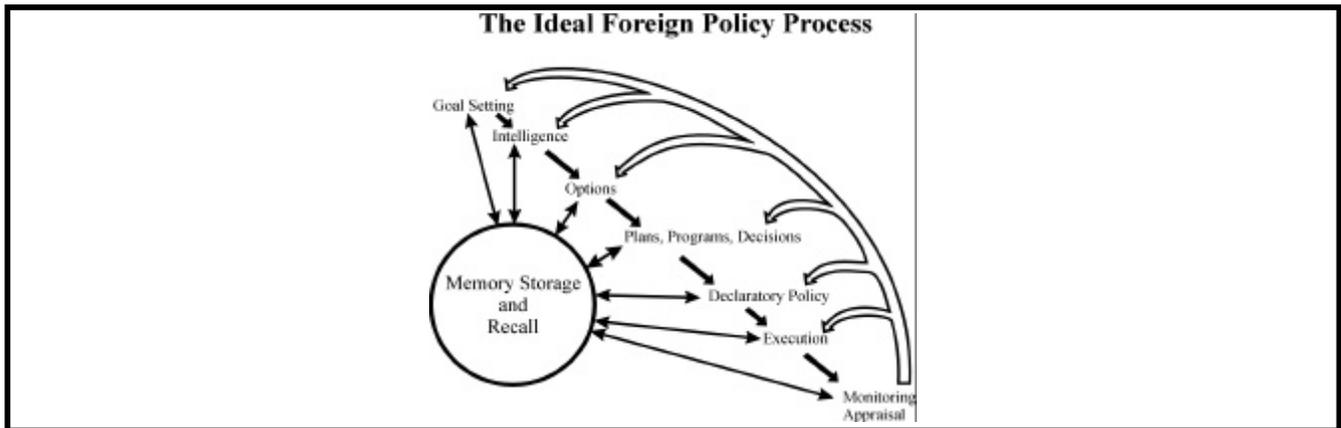
"...tension between NSC and State derives in part from the former's control of the agenda and the latter's control of implementation. State Department officials tend to be anxious about the NSC usurping policy, and the NSC tends to be concerned that State either might not implement the President's decisions or might do so in a way that would make decisions State disapproved of appear ineffective and wrong."⁸

The NSC staff is ideally a coordinating body but it oscillates between the poles, taking policy control over some issues while allowing the State or Defense to be the lead agency on most national security and foreign policy issues. On some key issues, such as the Kosovo

crisis of 1998-99, the NSC staff may take over policy control from State. Similarly, policy towards Cuba and Haiti in 1993-95 was handled directly out of the White House because of the deeply rooted domestic dimension of those issues. The Oliver North Iran-Contra caper created an autonomous operational entity within the NSC staff. But this was an aberration that does not invalidate the general rule. The salient point is that proximity to the President gives the NSC staff significant policy clout in the interagency process. Such clout must be used sparingly lest it cause resentment and resistance or overlook the policy wisdom and skills available elsewhere in the executive departments.

TOWARDS A THEORY OF THE INTERAGENCY PROCESS: HOW DOES THE PRESIDENT MOBILIZE THE GOVERNMENT?

The interagency is not a place. It is a process involving human beings and complex organizations with different cultures, different outlooks on what's good for the national interest and the best policy to pursue—all driven by the compulsion to defend and expand turf. The process is political (therefore conflictual) because at stake is power, personal, institutional, or party. The “power game” involves the push and pull of negotiation, the guarding of policy prerogatives, of hammering out compromises, and the normal human and institutional propensity to resist change.⁹ Regardless of the style of the President and the structures developed for the management of national security policy, the NSC dominated interagency process performs the same basic functions: identifies policy issues and questions, formulates options, raises issues to the appropriate level for decisions, makes decisions where appropriate, and oversees the implementation of decisions throughout the executive departments.



Source: John P. Lovell, *The Challenge of American Foreign Policy: Purpose and Adaptation*, p. 26.

Figure 3. The Ideal Foreign Policy Process.

It is helpful to view policy at five interrelated levels: conceptualization, articulation, budgeting, implementation, and post-implementation analysis and feedback. Conceptualization involves the complex intellectual task of policy development, such as a Presidential Decision Directive (PDD). Articulation is the public declaration of policy that the

President or subordinates make. It is critical in a democracy in order to engage public support. Budgeting involves testimony before Congress to justify policy goals and to request funding. Implementation is the programmed application of resources in the field in order to achieve the policy objectives. Post-implementation analysis and feedback is a continuous effort to assess the effectiveness of policy and to make appropriate adjustments.

The ideal system would have perfect goal setting, complete and accurate intelligence, comprehensive analysis and selection of the best options, clear articulation of policy and its rationale, effective execution, thorough and continuous assessment of the effects, and perfect learning from experience and the ability to recall relevant experience and information. Such perfection is impossible. The reality is:

POLICY IN PRACTICE

TASK	CAPABILITY
Goal Setting	National interests are object of competing claims; goals established through political struggle
Intelligence	Always incomplete, susceptible to overload, delays and distortions caused by biases and ambiguity in interpretation
Option Formulation	Limited search for options, comparisons made in general terms according to predispositions rather than cost-benefit analysis
Plans, Programs, Decisions	Choices made in accordance with prevailing mind sets, often influenced by groupthink and political considerations
Declaratory Policy	Multiple voices, contradictions and confusion, self-serving concern for personal image and feeding the appetite of the media
Execution	Breakdowns in communication, fuzzy lines of authority, organizational parochialism, bureaucratic politics, delays
Monitoring and Appraisal	Information gaps, vague standards, rigidities in adaptation, feedback failures
Memory Storage and Recall	Spotty and unreliable, selective learning and application of lessons ¹⁰

Effective policy requires vision, control, resources, and a system of accountability. The most compelling challenge for the executive is to retain policy control. Since Presidents don't have the time and expertise to oversee policy making in detail (though Jimmy Carter tried), they delegate responsibility. But "nobody is in charge" is an often-heard refrain of the interagency process. By delegating responsibility, control becomes more diffused and the policy effort diluted. Moreover, the quest for resources brings in another stakeholder. Congress has the constitutional responsibility to scrutinize policy initiatives and vote monies for foreign affairs and national defense. By then, a literal Pandora's box of players and expectations are opened. The numerous congressional committees and their staffs have enormous impact on national security and foreign policy.

The President begins to mobilize his government immediately upon election. A transition team works closely with the outgoing administration for the purpose of continuity. He begins nominating his cabinet, which must then be confirmed by the Senate. Some 6,000 presidential level appointees will fill the subcabinet positions, staff the White House and the National Security Council, take up ambassadorships (serving ambassadors traditionally submit their resignation when the occupant of the White House changes), as well as second, third, and fourth level positions in the executive departments. The purpose of these nominations is to gain control and establish accountability to the President and his agenda. In his first administration, Bill Clinton faced the impediment of never finishing staffing his government.

Thus, there is a high turnover and the injection of new talent, at times inexperienced and equipped with new predispositions about national security, at the top echelons of American government every time the part that controls the White House changes. Continuity of government resides in the nonpartisan professionals (neutral competence) of the federal civil service, the diplomatic service, the military, and the intelligence community. The transition to a new administration is a period of great anticipation about the direction of policy. Consequently, the entire interagency produces transition papers to assist and inform the newcomers, and to also protect the institutional interests of the various departments from unfriendly encroachment.

The first months of a new administration are a period of learning. Newly appointed people must familiarize themselves with the structure and process of policymaking. This necessity invariably leads to a trial-and-error atmosphere. In anticipation of the passing of the mantle, think tanks and the foreign policy and defense communities prepare for the transition by writing papers recommending the rationale for policy. These will inform the new administration about the central commitments of U.S. policy and provide opportunities for departments and agencies to define institutional turf and stake a claim to resources. The administration itself will also mandate policy reviews (Presidential Review Directives) that eventually produce new guidance for policy.

Making speeches and declaring policy and doctrines is another way. The State of the Union message is one of the preeminent sources of presidential activism that engages the interagency. The Congressionally mandated National Security Strategy (NSS) document, which bears the President's signature and is supposed to be produced annually, is eagerly

awaited, though not with equal intensity across departments, as an indicator of an administration's direction in national security and foreign policy.

The NSS is eagerly awaited for another reason; it is the best example of "purposeful adaptation" by the American government to changing global realities and responsibilities. It expresses strategic vision, what the United States stands for in the world, its priorities, and a sensing of how the instruments of national power, the diplomatic, economic, and military will be arrayed. Since it is truly an interagency product, the NSS also serves to provide direction to the interagency system to understand the President's agenda and priorities and develops a common language that gives coherence to policy. It is also more than a strategic document. It is political because it is designed to enhance presidential authority in order to mobilize the nation. Finally, the NSS tends to document rather than drive policy initiatives, especially in election years. (For further insights on these points, see Chapter 10.)

The first NSS in 1987 focused on the Soviet threat. The Bush Administration expanded it by including more regional strategies, economic policy, arms control, and transnational issues and the environment. The Clinton document of 1994 proposed "engagement and enlargement," promoting democracy, economic prosperity, and security through strength. The 1995 version added criteria on when and how military forces would be used. By 1997, the integrating concepts of "shape," "prepare," and "respond" for the national military strategy came into prominence. To the core objectives of enhancing security, promoting prosperity and democracy were added fighting terrorism, international crime and drug trafficking, along with managing the international financial crisis. Homeland defense against the threat of mass casualty attacks and regional strategies completed the agenda.

Another instrument is the Presidential Decision Directive process. Other administrations have titled these documents differently, such as Bush's National Security Decision Directive (NSDD). The two Clinton administrations produced over 70 PDDs by mid 2000. Bush produced 79 National Security Directives, Reagan 325 National Security Decision Directives, Carter 63 Presidential Directives, Nixon-Ford 348 National Security Decision Memoranda, and Kennedy-Johnson 372 National Security Action Memoranda. Each administration will put its own stamp on national security and foreign policy, though there is great continuity with previous administrations. Whereas Reagan emphasized restoring the preeminence of American military power and rolling back the "evil empire," Clinton focused on strengthening the American economy, open trade, democratization, conflict resolution, humanitarian assistance, fighting drug trafficking and consumption, counter-terrorism and nonproliferation. The most famous Reagan NSDD was 75: "U.S. Relations with the USSR."¹¹

PDDs are macro level documents, normally classified, that take much deliberate planning to develop. They result from intensive interaction among the agencies. The process begins with a Presidential Review Directive, which tasks the relevant agencies to develop a new policy based on broad guidance. For example, Clinton's PDD 14 for counter narcotics, the "Andean Strategy" of November 1993, emphasized greater balance between supply and demand strategies. PDD 25, "U.S. Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations" (May 1994), set down an elaborate set of guidelines for U.S. involvement in peace operations. It

became so effective that the United Nations adopted it for planning its own peace operations, an excellent example of the international transfer of American purposeful adaptation.

An instructive example is the Latin American policy PDD 21. Effective on December 27, 1993, it emphasized democracy promotion and free trade. It was addressed to more than twenty departments and agencies: Vice President, Secretary of State, Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of Defense, Attorney General, Secretary of Commerce, Secretary of Labor, Director of the Office of Management and Budget, United States Trade Representative, Representative of the United States to the United Nations, Chief of Staff to the President, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, Director of Central Intelligence, Chair of the Council of Economic Advisors, Assistant to the President for National Economic Policy, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Administrator of the Agency for International Development, Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and Director of the United States Information Agency.

The point of listing departments and agencies is to identify the interagency stakeholders in regional policy, though the size of the stake will vary greatly among them. The stakeholders are related *by functional interdependence*; they have different resources, personnel, and expertise that must be integrated for policy to be effective. It is an iron rule of the interagency that *no national security or international affairs issue can be resolved by one agency alone*. For example, the Department of Defense needs the diplomatic process that the Department of State masters in order to deploy forces abroad, build coalitions, negotiate solutions to conflict, conduct noncombatant evacuations (NEO) of American citizens caught in difficult circumstances abroad, and administer security assistance. The Department of State in turn depends on the logistical capabilities of Defense to deploy personnel and materials abroad during crises, conduct coercive diplomacy, support military-to-military contacts, and give substance to alliances and defense relationships. The Office of National Drug Control Policy, a new cabinet position, must rely on a range of agencies to reduce the supply abroad and consumption of drugs at home. Finally, all require intelligence input to make sound decisions.

Ideally in response to the promulgation of a PDD, all agencies will energize their staffs and develop the elements that shape the policy programs. But this takes time and seldom creates optimum results, in part because of competing priorities on policy makers, limited time, constrained resources, and congressional input. For example, with respect to Latin American policy, the Haiti crisis of 1992-1994 and congressional passage of the North America Free Trade Act would consume most of the kinetic energy of the Clinton Administration's NSC staff and the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs of the Department of State during 1993-94. The Central American crisis of the 1980s crowded out the broader agenda for Latin American policy.

In theory, once the policy elements are put together, they are costed out and submitted to Congress for approval and funding, without which policy is merely words of hopeful expectations. The reality, however, is that a PDD is not a permanent guide to the actions of agencies. Rarely is it fully implemented. It can be overtaken by new priorities, new

administrations, and by the departure of senior officials who had the stakes, the personal relationships, know how, and institutional memory to make it work. A senior NSC staffer, Navy Captain Joseph Bouchard, Director of Defense Policy and Arms Control, remarked in 1999 that one cannot be sure about whether a PDD from a previous administration is still in force because for security reasons no consolidated list of these documents is maintained. Moreover, PDDs and other presidential documents are removed to the presidential library and the archives when a new President takes over. A senior Defense Department official states that PDDs are rarely referred to after they are final, are usually overtaken by events soon after publication, and are rarely updated. In this respect the interagency evaluation of PDD 56's effectiveness, published in May 1997, is instructive: "PDD 56 no longer has senior level ownership. The Assistant Secretaries, Deputy Assistant Secretaries, and the NSC officials who initiated the document have moved on to new positions."¹²

PDD 56: EPHEMERAL OR PURPOSEFUL ADAPTATION?

It is useful to examine PDD 56 as an example of an interagency product and as a tool intended to influence the very process itself. PDDs normally deal with the external world of foreign policy and national security. PDD 56 is radically different, for it goes beyond that and attempts to generate a cultural revolution in the way the U.S. Government prepares and organizes to deal with these issues. PDD 56, *The Clinton Administration's Policy on Managing Complex Contingency Operations*, is perhaps the mother of all modern PDDs. It is a superb example of codifying lessons of "purposeful adaptation" after fitful efforts by American civilian and military officials in the aftermath of problematic interventions in Panama (1989-90), Somalia (1992-1994), and Haiti (1994-1995).¹³ The intent was to institutionalize interagency coordination mechanisms and planning tools to achieve U.S. Government unity of effort in complex contingency operations. It tried to institutionalize five mechanisms and planning tools:

1. An Executive Committee chaired by the Deputies Committee (Assistant Secretaries)
2. An integrated, interagency Political-Military Implementation Plan
3. Interagency Rehearsal
4. Interagency After-Action Review
5. Training

The philosophy behind the document is that interagency planning can make or break an operation. Moreover, early involvement in planning can accelerate contributions from civilian agencies that are normally culturally impeded from strategic and operational planning. An excellent *Handbook for Interagency Management of Complex Contingency Operations* issued in August 1998, containing in easy digestible form much wisdom about how to do it right. PDD 56 was applied extensively and adapted to new contingencies, such as Eastern Slavonia, Bosnia, Hurricane Mitch in Central America, the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict

since 1998, and the Kosovo contingency of 1998-99. The March 1999 review commented: "PDD 56 is intended to be applied as an integrated package of complementary mechanisms and tools...since its issuance in 1997, PDD 56 has not been applied as intended. Three major issues must be addressed to improve the utility of PDD 56." It recommended:

1. Greater authority and leadership to promote PDD 56
2. More flexible and less detailed political-military planning
3. Dedicated training resources and greater outreach

Imbedded in the three recommendations are the recurring problems of the interagency: the need for decisive authority ("nobody's in charge"), contrasting approaches and institutional cultures (particularly diplomatic versus military) with respect to planning, and the lack of incentives across the government to create professionals expert in interagency work. PDD 56 is a noble effort to promote greater effectiveness. It may bear fruit if its philosophy of integrated planning and outreach to the interagency takes root. In late 1999 the PDD 56 planning requirement became an annex to contingency plans.

THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL OF THE INTERAGENCY PROCESS: AMBASSADORS AND REGIONAL MILITARY COMMANDERS.

To this point we have discussed the national strategic level of the interagency process, that is, what occurs in Washington. Actually, the interagency process spans three levels: the national strategic, the operational, and the tactical. In the field, policy is implemented by ambassadors and their country teams, often working with the regional unified commanders. The embassy country team is a miniature replica of the Washington interagency system, with which it is in constant communication. Within the country team, the rubber literally meets the road of interagency implementation. The ambassador is responsible for all US government programs in the country. Ambassadors and CINCs rely on each other to promote policies that will enhance American interests in a country and region. CINCs have large staffs and awesome resources compared to the small staffs and resources of ambassadors. Moreover, their functions are different. The ambassador cultivates ties and is a conduit for bilateral communications through the art of diplomatic discourse. He or she promotes understanding of U.S. foreign policy, and promotes American culture and business, and is responsible for American citizens in that country. By virtue of distance, both the ambassador and CINC have a distinct advantage over the other actors within the Washington interagency: greater cohesion of effort due to better control over their staffs and the policy agenda. They also share a compelling interest: they are partners in fashioning the web of relations of America's defense diplomacy among the nations within their purview.

The ambassador is the President's personal emissary. The President writes a letter of instruction that charges the ambassador "to exercise full responsibility for the direction, coordination, and supervision of all executive branch officers in (name of country), except for personnel under the command of a U.S. area military commander...." There is enough

ambiguity in the mandate to require both ambassador and CINC to use common sense and, in a nonbureaucratic way, work out issues of command and control over U.S. military personnel in the country. In effect control is shared, the ambassador having policy control and the CINC control over day-to-day operations, though even here the Ambassador exercises oversight. Thus, it is prudent that both cooperate to ensure that military operations meet the objectives of U.S. policy.

This is particularly the case in military operations other than war. Before and during non-combatant evacuation operations (NEO), peace operations, exercises, disaster relief and humanitarian assistance, such cooperation will be imperative because of the different mixes of diplomacy, forces, and preparation required. A successful U.S. policy effort requires a carefully calibrated combination of diplomatic and military pressure, with economic inducements added. The security assistance officer at the embassy (usually the commander of the military advisory group) can facilitate communication and bridge the policy and operational distance between the ambassador and the CINC. So can State's Political Advisor to the CINC, a senior foreign service officer whose function is to provide the diplomatic and foreign policy perspective on military operations.¹⁴ The personal and professional relationship between the Political Advisor and the CINC is the key to success.

The CINC represents the coercive capacity of American power through a chain of command that goes to the President. He and his sizable staff command operational tempo, deployments, readiness, exercises, and training of divisions, brigades, fleets, and air wings—resources, language, and culture that complementary the art of statecraft. Since all military activities have diplomatic impact, it is prudent that both work harmoniously to achieve common purpose. The Commander of the Military Advisory Group (also called Military Liaison Office, Office of Defense Coordination) is the military representative on the country team and a conduit between the ambassador and the CINC.

The relationship between the ambassador and the CINC will change in wartime. As the environment transitions to war the CINC assumes greater authority and influence. Haiti 1994 is an excellent example of how the handoff from ambassador to CINC takes place. The American ambassador in Port-au-Prince, William Swing, was in charge of U.S. policy until General Hugh Shelton and the U.S. military forces arrived in September of that year. Once the military phase was completed, policy control reverted to Swing, thus restoring the normal pattern. Thus there is an interruption of ambassadorial authority under some circumstances followed by return to the *status quo ante*. In the gray area of operations other than war or in what is called an "immature" military theater, such as Latin America, disputes can arise between ambassadors and CINCs about jurisdiction over U.S. military personnel in the country. The most illustrative was in 1994 between the CINC of the U.S. Southern Command, General Barry McCaffrey, and the U.S. Ambassadors to Bolivia, Charles R. Bowers, and Colombia, Morris D. Busby. The dispute had to be adjudicated in Washington by the Secretaries of State and Defense.¹⁵ The fact is that ambassador and CINC must work closely together to coordinate U.S. military activities. There is another distinction: CINCs have a regional perspective, strategies, and programs while ambassadors are intensely focused on advancing the interests of the United States in one country.

THE CONTINUING PROBLEMS OF THE INTERAGENCY PROCESS

Comparing Military Officers and Foreign Service Officers

Military Officers	Foreign Service Officers
Mission: prepare for and fight war	Mission: conduct diplomacy
Training a major activity, important for units and individuals	Training not a high priority. Not important either for units or individuals
Extensive training for episodic, undesired events	Little formal training, learning by experience in doing desired activities (negotiating, reporting)
Uncomfortable with ambiguity	Can deal with ambiguity
Plans and planning—both general and detailed—are important core activities	Plan in general terms to achieve objectives but value flexibility and innovation
Doctrine: important	Doctrine: not important
Focused on military element of foreign policy	Focused on all aspects of foreign policy
Focused on discrete events and activities with plans, objectives, courses of action, endstates	Focused on on-going processes without expectation of an “endstate”
Infrequent real-world contact with opponents or partners in active war fighting	Day-to-day real-world contact with partners and opponents in active diplomacy
Officer corps commands significant numbers of NCOs and enlisted personnel	Officers supervise only other officers in core (political and economic) activities, but larger numbers of foreign nationals
NCOs and enlisted personnel perform many core functions (war fighting)	Only officers engage in core activity (diplomacy)
Leadership: career professional military officers (with the military services and in operations)	Leadership: a mix of political appointees and career Foreign Service professionals at headquarters and in field
All aspects of peace operations, including civilian/diplomatic, becoming more important	All aspects of peace operations, including military, becoming more important
Writing and written word less important, physical actions more important	Writing and written word very important. Used extensively in conduct of diplomacy
Teamwork and management skills are rewarded, interpersonal skills important internally	Individual achievement and innovative ideas rewarded, inter-personal skills important externally
Understand “humma-humma” and “deconflict”	Understand “démarches” and non-paper”
Accustomed to large resources, manpower, equipment, and money	Focus meager resources on essential needs

Adapted from Robert Johnson, Foreign Service Officer, “Teaching Notes,” Department of National Security and Strategy, U.S. Army War College, 1998.

The tensions generated by cultural differences and jealousy over turf will always be part of the interagency process. The diplomatic and the military cultures dominate the national security system, though there are other cultures and even subcultures. The former uses words to solve problems while the latter uses force. Cultural differences are large but

communicating across them is imperative.¹⁷ The table on the previous page compares the cultures of military officers and diplomats.

The principal problem of interagency decision making is lack of *decisive authority; there is no one in charge*. As long as personalities are involved who work well together and have leadership support in the NSC, interagency efforts will prosper, but such congruence is not predictable. The world situation does not wait for the proper alignment of the planets in Washington. There is too much diffusion of policy control. It is time to implement and NSC-centric national security system, with appropriate adjustments that align budget authority with policy responsibility. It would consolidate in the NSC the functions now performed by the Policy Planning Staff at State and the strategic planning done at Defense. Such reorganization recognizes the reality that the White House is where an integrated approach to national security planning must take place.

Asymmetries in resources are another impediment. The Department of State, which has the responsibility to conduct foreign affairs, is a veritable pauper. Its diplomats may have the best words in town, in terms of speaking and writing skills, and superb knowledge of foreign countries and foreign affairs, but it is a very small organization that has been getting smaller budget allocations from Congress. The corps of Foreign Service officers of nearly 5,000 equates to an Army brigade (3,600) plus. The Department of State's technology is primitive and officer professional development of the kind that the military does is not promoted. Moreover, unlike the military, State lacks a strong domestic constituency of support. The military has more money to conduct diplomacy.¹⁸

The *resource barons*, those with people, money, technical expertise, and equipment reside in DOD and the military services. Consequently, the military, especially the Army, is constantly being asked to provide resources out of hide for nation-building purposes, for example in Haiti and Panama. It is tempting to reach out to it because it is the only institution with an *expeditionary* capability, and fungible resources and expertise. It can get there quickly, show the flag, bring significant resources to bear, stabilize a situation, and create an environment secure enough for other agencies to operate. On a much smaller scale the Agency for International Development is a baron, because it has money and technical expertise to promote development and institution building. Other baronies exist, such as intelligence, Department of Justice, Commerce, and the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

Finally, the personnel systems of the various agencies of the U.S. Government *do not promote professionalization and rewards in interagency jobs*. What is needed is a systematic effort to develop civilian and military cadres that are experts in interagency policy coordination, integration, and operations. Some of this takes place. Military officers are assigned to various departments. For example, 35 officers from all services work in the regional and functional bureaus of the Department of State. Diplomats are also allocated to military and civilian agencies, such as Political Advisors at the regional unified commands, the Special Operations Command, to peacekeeping and humanitarian missions, various key positions in the Pentagon, and the war colleges. These programs must be expanded. There ought to be incentives for national security professionalism, as there are for service and joint.

For civilians, something akin to the Goldwater-Nichols Act for jointness in the military is needed to include the Department of State. Promotions should be based not only on performance at Foggy Bottom and in Embassies abroad, but on mandatory interagency tours as well. Similarly professional development incentives should apply to civil servants that work in the national security arena.

Admittedly, mandatory interagency tours would require significant changes in personnel systems and career tracking. The Report of the National Defense Panel of 1997, *Transforming Defense: National Security in the 21st Century*, recommended creating "an interagency cadre of professionals, including civilian and military officers, whose purpose would be to staff key positions in the national security structures."¹⁹ This would build on the jointness envisioned by the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act. The Report also recommended a national security curriculum for a mix of civilian, military, and foreign students. The Defense Leadership and Management Program of the Department of Defense, a Master's level initiative in national security studies for civilian personnel, is an important step in this direction.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE MILITARY PROFESSIONAL.

There are critical implications for the military warrior. The nature of future warfare is likely to be more operations other than war, requiring more mobile, flexible light forces. Future war will also require a more intellectual military officer, one who understands the imperative of having to work with the panoply of civilian agencies, nongovernment organizations, the national and international media, and with foreign armed forces. It is a commonplace of strategy that American forces will rarely fight alone again; they will do so in coalition. Thus, the strategic Clausewitzian trinity of the people, the armed forces, and the government now encompasses the global community. The implications are clear; the military officer will have to develop greater diplomatic and negotiating skills, greater understanding of international affairs, capability in foreign languages, and more than a passing acquaintance with economics.

Moreover, the warrior will likely work with civilian counterparts across a spectrum of activities short of war. These include: strategic planning and budgeting, humanitarian assistance, peace operations, counter narcotics, counter terrorism, security assistance, environmental security, human rights, democratization, civil-military relations, arms control, intelligence, war planning and termination strategy, command and control of forces, continuity of government, post-conflict reconstruction, technology transfer, crisis management, overseas basing, alliances, noncombatant evacuation operations, and homeland defense.

Therefore, the future officer will also need greater appreciation of the institutional diversity and complexity of government, because of the need to advise a diversity of civilians on the utility of military power in complex contingencies that are neither peace nor war, as Americans are accustomed to think of them. He or she will have to work in tandem with civilian agencies and nongovernmental organizations unaccustomed to command systems

and deliberate planning, and who often do not understand the limits of military power.²⁰ Lastly, instruction on the interagency system and process should be mandatory for civilians and military alike. It must have a sound theoretical foundation in national security decisionmaking, strategic planning, and organizational behavior, expanded by sophisticated case studies of relevant historical experiences.

What attributes should the military officer bring? Above all, holistic thinking, the ability to think in terms of all the instruments of national power and respect for the functions and cultures of diverse departments and agencies. Communication skills are paramount. The effective interagency player writes and speaks well. He or she will be bilingual, able to function in military as well as civilian English. Bureaucratic jargon is the enemy of interagency communication. The military briefing, an excellent vehicle for quickly transmitting a lot of information in formatted style, is less appreciated by other cultures. One must be less conscious of rank because ranks will vary among the representative around a table. Some one of lower rank may be in charge of a meeting. A sense of humor, patience, endurance, and tolerance for ambiguity and indecisiveness will help. The ability to “stay in your box” and articulate the perspective of your department will be respected, though the temptation to poach on other domains will be there. The ability to anticipate issues, to consider the second and third order effects from the national level down to the country team and theater levels, will be invaluable. Finally, the interagency requires diplomatic and negotiating skills, the ability to network, and mastery of the nuances of bureaucratic politics and language.²¹

The most evolved democracy in the world has the most cumbersome national security decision-making process. Inefficiency is the price the founding fathers imposed for democratic accountability. But some of the inefficiency is the result of American strategic culture, with its multiplicity of players, plentiful but diffused resources, and the propensity to segment peace and diplomacy from war and military power. Major structural changes must be made in the interagency system in order to harness human talent and resources intelligently. It is time to move away from one for 1947 to one for the next century.

ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 9

1. Chas. W. Freeman, Jr., *Arts of Power: Statecraft and Diplomacy*, Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997, p. 3.

2. General Henry H. Shelton, “Force, Diplomacy and National Security: Managing Complex Contingencies in a Complex World,” Address to the Secretary of State’s Open Forum, Washington, D.C., June 15, 2000.

3. John P. Lovell, *The Challenge of American Foreign Policy: Purpose and Adaptation*, New York: Collier MacMillan, 1985, p. 7.

4. A 1987 report of the National Academy of Public Administration noted: “...the institutional memory of the United States Government for important national security affairs was worse than that of any other major world power and had resulted in mistakes and embarrassments in the past which would be bound to recur.” *Strengthening U.S. Government Communications: Report of the National Academy of Public Administration*, Washington, D.S., 1987, p. 227, cited in Margaret Jane Wyszomirski, “Institutional Memory: Improving the

National Security Advisory Process," in James Gaston, editor, *Grand Strategy and the Decisionmaking Process*, Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 1991, p. 194.

5. Anthony Lake, I.M. Destler, and Leslie Gelb, *Our Own Worst Enemy: The Unmaking of American Foreign Policy*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985.

6. Anthony Lake, *Somoza Falling: The Nicaraguan Dilemma, A Portrait of Washington At Work*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989, p. 32.

7. Lake, p. 114.

8. Robert Pastor, *Condemned to Repetition: The United States and Nicaragua*, Princeton University Press, 1987, p. 81.

9. Hedrick Smith, *The Power Game: How Washington Works*, New York: Random House, 1988.

10. Adapted from Lovell, p. 32.

11. The document has been declassified and is now available with commentary by Norman A. Bailey, "The Strategic Plan that Won the Cold War: National Security Directive 75," McLean, Virginia: The Potomac Foundation, 1999. PDDs and their ancestors are available from the National Archives and the respective Presidential libraries, as well as on line at <<http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/pdd/index.html>>.

12. Institute of National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, "Improving the Utility of Presidential Decision Directive 56: A Plan of Action for the Joint Chiefs of Staff," Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, March 1999, p. 16.

13. For an excellent analysis of lessons learned and prudent policy recommendations from recent U.S. military interventions, see: John T. Fishel, *Civil-Military Operations in the New World*, New York: Praeger, 1997; Fishel, *The Fog of Peace: Planning and Executing the Restoration of Panama*, Carlisle Barracks: Strategic Studies Institute, April 15, 1992. A penetrating analysis of the operational and tactical dimensions of the interagency process, particularly as they apply to the U.S. Army at the operational and tactical levels, is: Jennifer Taw Morrison, *Interagency Coordination in Military Operations Other than War: Implications for the U.S. Army*, Santa Monica: RAND Arroyo Center, 1997.

14. Excellent advice on how the ambassador and the regional unified commander should work together is found in: Ted Russell. "The Role of the Ambassador, the Country Team, and Their Relations with Regional Commanders," in U.S. Army War College, *Course Directive: Regional Strategic Appraisals*, AY 97, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 1997, pp. C1-C9. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of State and the Department of Defense covers the function of the Political Advisor. The MOU "recognizes the valuable role POLADs render to the Department of Defense and the Department of State in assessing the political implications of military planning and strategy and in serving as the principal source of counsel on international issues to their respective Commanders-in-Chief...the deep level of commitment and cooperation acknowledged by the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense in executing foreign and security policy established by the President." For information on the growing role of regional commanders as military diplomats see the series by Dana Priest: "A Four –Star Foreign Policy?," "An Engagement in 10 Time Zones," and "Standing Up to State and Congress," *Washington Post*, respectively September 28, 2000, p. A1; September 29, 2000, p. A1; September 30, 2000, p. A1.

15. For specifics, see the telegrams: 061358Z June 1994 from USCINCSOUTH, 082221Z June 1994 from Embassy La Paz, 092106Z June 1994 from Embassy Bogota, 142345Z June 1994 from USCINCSOUTH, and 152152Z January 1997 from the Department of State.

16. The classic study of the role of culture and turf in government is James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It*, New York: Harper Collins, 1989. Pertinent are the excellent

studies: George T. Raach and Ilana Kass, "National Power and the Interagency Process," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Summer 1995, pp. 8-13; Douglas A. Hartwick, "The Culture at State, the Services, and Military Operations: Bridging the Communication Gap," Washington, D.C.; National War College, April 12, 1984; Rosemary Hansen and Rick Rife, "Defense is from Mars and State is from Venus: Improving Communications and Promoting National Security," Palo Alto: Stanford University, May 1998. Other impediments to sound decision making are: groupthink, information overload, insufficient information, lack of time, faulty analogy, insufficient analysis of options, and the personal predispositions of the decision makers. The interaction of these factors is explored in the writings of Irving L. Janis, Alexander George, and Graham Allison.

17. Resource problems seriously diminish the quality of American diplomacy. For more information see: Peter Galbraith, "Reinventing Diplomacy Again," *Foreign Service Journal*, February 1999, pp. 20-28; Jane Perlez, "As Diplomacy Loses Luster, Young Stars Flee State Dept.," *New York Times*, September 5, 2000 (nytimes.com/library/world/global/090500us-statedept.html); Richard N. Gardner, "The One Percent Solution: Shirking the Cost of World Leadership," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 79, No. 4 (July-August 2000), pp. 2-11.

18. National Defense Panel, *Transforming Defense: National Security in the 21st Century*, Arlington, Virginia: 1997, p. 66.

19. There are indications that even the Department of State, the first among equals of the executive departments, is beginning to understand the value of strategic planning. See: Secretary's Office of Resources, Plans, and Policy, U.S. Department of State, *U.S. Department of State Strategic Plan*, Washington, D.C., September 2000. Excellent advice on how military culture should interact with the culture of nongovernmental organizations during humanitarian relief operations, peacekeeping, and stability operations is: Judith Stiehm, "The Challenge of Civil-Military Cooperation in Peacekeeping," *Airman-Scholar*, Vol. IV, No.1 (Winter 1998), pp. 26-35.

20. Military officers contemplating assignment to the Pentagon or civilians wishing to understand how to work with counterparts there should read the advice in: Perry Smith, *Assignment Pentagon: The Insider's Guide to the Potomac Puzzle Palace*, second edition, revised, Washington: Brassey's, 1992.