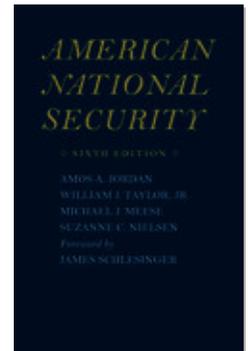# American National Security

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The Role of the Military in
the Policy Process

The military plays a unique and crucial role in U.S. national security policy for a number of reasons. First, the military's coercive capabilities make democratic political control a matter of central importance. This concern shaped the drafting of the U.S. Constitution and, therefore, the legal framework that continues to govern military affairs to this day. Second, since the Korean War in the 1950s, the U.S. military has made a consistently large claim on national resources. The Department of Defense (DoD), with a budget of over $400 billion in fiscal year (FY) 2006 and over 3 million employees who work in more than 163 countries, is "America's largest company."[1] Military spending constitutes the single largest category of discretionary spending in the U.S. federal budget (see Chapter 9). Finally, the importance of the military instrument of power to U.S. national security policy makes the effectiveness of America's military institutions a matter of great consequence (see Chapters 13 through 17).

The American Historical Experience

Early American History and the U.S. Constitution.   As discussed in Chapter 2, America's wariness of standing armies is rooted in the colonial experience. Not only did the Founding Fathers experience the negative effects of a powerful and often oppressive British army, they also recognized the unfortunate consequences of militarism within the countries of Europe.

At the conclusion of the Revolution, the American army was essentially disbanded, and the national government was left with the task of governing under the Articles of Confederation. Under the Articles, the national government had very little power to maintain an army or even to raise one for national emergencies.

After several violent domestic incidents (most notably an uprising of farmers in 1786 and 1787 against crushing debt and higher taxes known as Shays' Rebellion), and in the presence of increasing border threats, the Founding Fathers went to great lengths to fix a government that was decidedly weak in many facets of national security.

The "fix" was ultimately the U.S. Constitution. As they debated its final content, the Framers found it challenging to agree on wording that would provide for physical security from foreign and domestic threats while simultaneously protecting the state and society from a potentially dangerous standing army.[2] Douglas Johnson and Steven Metz write:

> Amid intense debate and calls to ban a standing army altogether, the Framers of the Constitution crafted a compromise between military effectiveness and political control. They trusted balance, the diffusion of power, and shared responsibility—all basic elements of the new political system—to control the military.[3]

These elements were codified in the final document through several provisions designed to "provide for the common defense":[4]

- Article 2, section 8, of the Constitution gives power over the military to the legislative branch by listing such specific powers as "To declare War," "To raise and support Armies," and "To provide and maintain a Navy." Moreover, the Constitution provides the states with the authority to maintain militias. These provisions were intended to preclude the executive branch from making war without the consent of the legislature and to balance state and federal power.

- Article 2, section 2, of the Constitution gives the roles of chief executive and commander in chief to the president. This ensures civilian supremacy by placing the chief executive at the top of the military chain of command and also aids military effectiveness by providing for unity of command in the employment of military forces.

- The Second Amendment emphasizes the role of the citizen-soldier by providing for "the right of the people to keep and bear Arms." Like the militia clause, this provision also limits the federal government's monopoly on the means of war.

- The Third Amendment protects U.S. citizens from the pre-Revolutionary custom of quartering soldiers in private homes "without the consent of the Owner."

This intricate system of checks and balances was meant to enable the establishment and employment of an effective military while ensuring it could never become a danger to the society it was created to protect. This formulation also ensured the involvement of both the president and Congress in the creation of military policy (see Chapters 4 and 5).

Historic Noninfluence.   Prior to World War II, it was only in exceptional cases—those directly linked to wartime circumstances—that the military significantly influenced the formulation of national policy. General Winfield Scott, commander in Mexico in 1846, established occupation policies as he conquered.

Again during the Civil War, the influence of the commanding general of the army upon the secretary of war, the president, and Congress was great, especially in the latter years of Ulysses S. Grant's ascendancy. Perhaps the most direct instance of military policy making in that conflict occurred with the reestablishment of state and local governments in the South; the programs instituted by military commanders for such governance were underwritten as national policy by President Abraham Lincoln in 1863.

Military influence in policy formulation was also evident during the occupation of the Philippines immediately after the Spanish-American War. During World War I, General John J. Pershing was given wide discretion in dealing directly with Allies and in establishing requirements on the national government at home. Shortly after World War I, both General Peyton C. March and Pershing proposed plans to Congress for maintaining an army substantially stronger than the pre–World War I establishment. These plans were at least seriously considered before being rejected.[5]

The examples above typify the generally accepted rule prior to World War II: that the military should play a role in the formulation of national security policy only when the duress of war made the armed forces responsible for executing such policy. The general absence of any major threats to the nation's existence, apart from the Civil War, left the military services with only the routine problems of continental defense, suppression of Indians, internal development (especially of rivers and railroads), protection of trade, contingency planning, and passive support of a largely isolationist foreign policy. Neither the structure of government nor the necessity of military missions compelled sustained involvement of the military in national policy.

World War II and the National Security Act of 1947.   World War II and the immediate postwar years marked a total break with the past. The clear wartime need for interdepartmental coordination of political-military affairs led to the establishment of the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee in late 1944. Consisting of ranking civilian officials from each department and supported by a system of interdepartmental subcommittees, including senior military participants, the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee marked the beginning of institutionalized military influence at the highest levels of the national security policy formulation apparatus.

The demands of World War II also led to other important changes in the role of the military in the national security policymaking process. First, the uniformed chiefs of the services began to meet regularly as the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) and to maintain direct liaison with the president.[6] Second, due to factors that included the relative detachment of the State Department from military operations and the goal of "total victory," the services played the leading role in developing war termination and postwar occupation policies. For example, the key political decision of whether Berlin was to be taken by the U.S. Army was not decided in Washington but left to the discretion of the military commander in the field.[7] In occupied areas, including Berlin, officials of the military government made the

critical decisions. The question of the number and ideological composition of the political parties permitted to develop in postwar, allied-occupied Germany, for instance, was determined by senior War Department officials.[8] General Douglas MacArthur ruled over the occupation in Japan with virtual independence. Third, superior organization and resources enabled the military to play an expanded role in all areas of national security policy formulation. Especially effective was the Operations Division of the War Department's general staff, which formed the core of wartime and immediate postwar political military planning for the U.S. effort.[9]

In the immediate postwar years, civilian elements gradually began to reassert their traditional roles in foreign policy.[10] State Department leadership in postwar European recovery, symbolized by the Marshall Plan, and the central role of the State Department in the structure that conducted postwar political and economic planning shifted the initiative in policy making away from the military establishment. Not only did the military's advantage in organizational terms shrink, but so did its vast resources. Military appropriations dropped sharply, and Army strength contracted from over 8 million personnel on V-J Day to less than 2 million a year later.[11] At the same time, rapid changes in military technology meant that vehicles and aircraft accumulated during the war were already obsolete.

Despite these trends, the lessons of political-military coordination learned during World War II were retained. The many joint and interdepartmental committees and advisory groups formed during the war were first brought into a formalized plan for civil-military coordination in the National Security Act of 1947.[12] In addition to establishing the National Security Council (NSC) and a secretary of defense (see Chapters 4 and 10), the act created a "national security establishment" consisting of the three service departments (Army, Navy, and Air Force) linked together by a series of joint committees and coordinated by the three services' chiefs sitting collectively as the JCS. The members of the JCS were authorized staffs and became the principal military advisors to the president and secretary of defense. The act also provided the legal basis for the creation of U.S. military unified and specified commands worldwide.

In the Key West Agreement of 1948, the JCS was designated to be the executive agent for unified and specified commands. This meant that the JCS would be responsible for day-to-day communications and supervision of operational forces, as well as coordination among the services to define the roles and missions of each. Legislation in 1949 strengthened the role of the secretary of defense by creating a unified DoD with authority over the services. It also removed the service secretaries from the president's cabinet and from the NSC, increased the size of the joint staff, and added a chairman to preside over the JCS.

The slow unification of the national military establishment during and after World War II, first codified in the 1947 National Security Act, dramatically changed the power relationships between and among the services, Congress, and other executive branch departments. With America irreversibly involved in global affairs after its overwhelming victory, how each institution or organization influenced national security policy in relation to the others became a dynamic issue that continues to challenge policy makers to this day.

The Cold War and the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986.   By 1949, the Communist Party's victory in China's civil war; Soviet initiatives in Greece, the Middle East, Berlin, and Eastern Europe; and the Soviet acquisition of nuclear weapons had prompted a series of Western countermeasures, which together constituted the policy of *containment* discussed in Chapter 3. In turn, recognition of the urgent necessity for Allied cooperation led to the provision of large amounts of U.S. military assistance to friendly states.[13] Military expertise was also drawn on in constructing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) alliance and in securing Allied agreement to the rearmament and participation of Germany in the buildup of NATO.[14] Military proconsuls, such as MacArthur in Japan and Lucius Clay in Germany, as well as distinguished World War II leaders, such as George Marshall, Dwight Eisenhower, and Omar Bradley, continued to serve in positions of great responsibility and influence.

With the beginning of the Korean War in 1950, a major shift in resources again took place, and this time the change was more permanent. In a period of four years (1950–1954), the share of gross national product devoted to national defense rose from 5.2% to 13.5%, and military expenditures increased from \$13 billion in FY 1950 to \$50.4 billion in FY 1953.[15] As the hostilities in Korea once again expanded the military's role in the formulation and execution of policy, they also complicated it. One of the first messages of the Korean War was that the World War II concept of autonomy for the theater commander in the prosecution of the war was to be curtailed significantly. MacArthur's relief from command in the Far East by President Harry Truman was the result of a long series of attempts by MacArthur to shape U.S. policy in his theater independent of events in Europe or of general national policy.[16] At a time when expectation of war with the Soviets in Europe was high, the view of a local commander could no longer be followed without regard for worldwide ramifications of local actions. The JCS and their civilian superiors feared that the communist attack in Korea was a feint and prelude to a full-scale assault in Europe. As the United States moved through the uncharted waters of limited war, military leaders were forced to examine political and military objectives in strikingly different ways from the unconditional surrender and total victory formulations of World War II. They also had to adjust to fighting a war unsupported by a total national mobilization.

Despite the enlarged military establishment after the Korean War and the increased projection of military influence abroad, strong interservice rivalries weakened the military's voice within the national security establishment. Such rivalry was not without certain advantages. The conflict of ideas and doctrines protected against unanimous error. Moreover, potential conflict between civil and military institutions was deflected into competition among military groups. Because the resolution of these basic conflicts required civilian judgment, civilian control was enhanced. Not only were civilian political leaders able to find military support for almost any plausible strategy they might propose, but they also were given a convenient political cover: Interservice rivalry provided "a whipping boy upon whom to blame deficiencies in the military establishment for which (just possibly) they (political leaders) conceivably might be held responsible."[17]

Yet the deficiencies of these rivalries were obvious. Cost-effective management of the DoD proved inordinately difficult, with the uniformed services sometimes appealing departmental—or even presidential—decisions to congressional allies and winning support. The JCS was seldom able to agree upon an overall defense program within budgetary ceilings. In turn, confidence in the efficacy of military judgment, so high in the early years after World War II, tended to be eroded by the spectacle of public disagreement and dissension. More serious were fears that the defense organization was simply ineffective, relying on logrolling and compromise without effective planning or real control by anyone.[18]

In the years that followed the National Security Act of 1947, subsequent efforts at DoD reorganization repeatedly sought to increase civilian control over the military while reducing the harmful tendency to allocate resources and to develop policies on a bargaining-for-shares-of-the-pie basis. Controversies over weapons systems procurement and service missions also prompted efforts toward centralization of control. In 1958, the National Security Act was again amended to give the secretary of defense greater authority, more influence in strategic planning, and greater control over the JCS. The military departments were further downgraded administratively, and the functions of the military services were revised to exclude control over unified and specified commands. Under the new provisions, these commands were controlled directly by the secretary of defense.

The reforms of the 1950s empowered the secretary of defense to exercise greater control of the department and the services. The tools of cost accounting and systems analysis developed under Secretary Robert McNamara in the 1960s made this control a reality. Supported by a host of young, talented "whiz kids," McNamara used the new techniques to preempt military influence in both procurement and strategy.[19] In part, this greater centralization was a logical outcome of the development of new budgetary and analytical techniques. More fundamentally, however, it grew out of persistent service disagreements, extension of civilian staff, and increased demand for civilian control over the military (see Chapter 9 for a more thorough discussion of the McNamara revolution).

Although necessary for both strategic and economic reasons, centralization posed a severe dilemma for the military, especially for the JCS. Unanimous agreements among the chiefs could usually be obtained by compromises, which were often unsupported by systems analysis. Split decisions, however, were even worse from the perspective of the military—they placed the locus of final decisions on military matters squarely in civilian hands. The personal loyalties of the individual chiefs to their services were, of course, sometimes a factor in disagreements, but continued rivalry also reflected fundamental differences over strategy and the relative capabilities of the various military staffs. As noted earlier, the JCS as a whole was provided with only a small staff to assist in the joint area. Each service chief also had a larger, more prestigious staff; not surprisingly, the advice of these service staffs was often colored by individual service perspectives and interests.

To overcome service parochialism and provide unified staff work, the 1958 DoD reorganization directed the joint chiefs to concentrate on their joint responsibilities and to delegate running the services to their vice chiefs. Furthermore,

control of the joint staff was transferred from the JCS as a whole to the chairman of the JCS. The joint staff was increased in size to four hundred positions and split evenly among the services. In practice, however, this did not solve the problems mentioned thus far in this chapter—it took nearly three more decades and several poor performances by the military (including the failed hostage rescue attempt in Iran in 1980 and an uncoordinated invasion of Grenada in 1983) for Congress to once again address military effectiveness and civilian control. That legislation was the Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986. *Goldwater-Nichols*, as the act is commonly known, is the most far-reaching legislation to address these issues since the National Security Act of 1947 (see also Chapter 5).

The act had several key features that were intended to promote "jointness" among the services. First, the authority of the chairman of the JCS was strengthened. The chairman was designated the principal military advisor to the president, the NSC, and the secretary of defense and was no longer required to report only JCS positions but was provided the latitude to offer advice that the chairman deemed appropriate. Second, the new position of JCS vice chairman was created with the expectation that this officer would act in the interest of the military establishment as a whole, with a focus on integrating the separate research, development, and procurement activities of the services. Third, the authority of commanders of unified and specified commands was also strengthened through the establishment of a chain of command that ran directly from the president to the secretary of defense to these commanders. Finally, legislation created a joint specialty within service personnel systems and required the services to send a fair share of their most outstanding officers to both the joint staff (in Washington) and the unified commands (in the field). Services were then required to ensure that officers who had joint backgrounds received their fair share of promotions. In sum, this push for "jointness" and interservice cooperation was the underlying purpose of the 1986 act.

The above discussion illuminates a number of trends that converged to shape the evolution of the role of the military in the national security process during the Cold War. First, military power remained a central means through which the United States pursued its security. Although defense spending declined again under Eisenhower from its Korean War levels, during the Cold War it never subsided to its demobilization nadir of the late 1940s (see Chapter 3). This commitment to larger military forces and, after 1961, to forward defense and some form of the doctrine of *flexible response* inevitably gave rise to an important role for military advice and to increased emphasis on professionalism in the officer corps. During international crises, presidents generally sought the counsel of experienced commanders who understood political objectives as well as military realities.

Second, the period of the Cold War saw the further institutionalization of the role of the military in the national security policy process. As discussed in Chapter 10, the formal decision-making structure supporting the president and the NSC evolved and grew to meet the policy coordination needs of a superpower that had assumed a global role. As military officers participated in interdepartmental coordinating committees, they were often influential in shaping policy in Washington

as well as in the field. In fact, during the 1960s, there was concern in some quarters that the military had too much influence with regard to U.S. policies in Southeast Asia. That the military significantly influenced national policy during the Vietnam War is incontrovertible, but it is equally clear that military voices were subordinated to civilian perspectives.[20] Rather than view the Vietnam War as a period of military influence, the lesson that many in the professional military drew from that conflict is that senior military officers—and particularly the JCS—were not forceful enough in providing their professional military advice to senior civilian decision makers.[21]

Third, continuing and expanding overseas defense commitments increased military involvement in policy making and also ensured that such involvement was not always limited to purely military issues. When Eisenhower, first supreme commander in Europe, reported to Congress on his mission in 1951, he stated clearly the nature of civil-military relations with regard to NATO:

> I spoke in every country to the Prime Minister and foreign minister at their request, and then I talked to the defense ministers and their chiefs of staff. There is no escaping the fact that when you take an area such as involved in all Western Europe and talk about its defense, you are right in the midst of political questions, economic, industrial, as well as strictly military, and you couldn't possibly divorce your commander from contact with them.[22]

In addition to senior levels of leadership, increasing numbers of officers served overseas in military advisory missions. Working with partners from other U.S. government agencies, military personnel often were advantaged by the comparatively large resources that the DoD wielded. Not only did military personnel frequently outnumber State Department personnel assigned to a given overseas mission, but many of the competing bureaucracies, such as the Agency for International Development, were relatively weak in the field and in the levels of Washington staffing necessary to support field operations.[23]

Fourth, individual members of the military were periodically selected to serve in important advisory roles at senior levels. For most of the Eisenhower Administration (from 1954–1961), General Andrew J. Goodpaster was the White House Staff Secretary and Defense Liaison. During the Kennedy years, senior officers and especially General Maxwell Taylor—who served for a time as the military representative to the president and, after retiring from the military, as ambassador to Vietnam—gained influence. During the Nixon Administration, General Alexander Haig served as the Deputy to National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger and later as White House Chief of Staff. The role of military officers in senior national policy positions was critically questioned in 1987, when Marine Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North was alleged to have conducted illegal covert operations as an NSC staff member with the approval of Vice Admiral John Poindexter, then assistant to the president for national security affairs. Ultimately, the North-Poindexter episode came to be seen as an isolated incident that did not preclude then Lieutenant General Colin Powell from being appointed the president's national security advisor within a year

and serving with distinction in that position, which is normally occupied by a civilian.

Fifth, the Cold War saw both the intensification of interservice rivalry and repeated attempts to resolve it. As mentioned above, the system under Truman and Eisenhower, who first set a budget ceiling and encouraged services to compete for their share, led to intense interservice competition. To a marked extent, the McNamara era in the Pentagon fundamentally changed this dynamic. At least officially, budgets were to be determined by how much was needed for national defense rather than arbitrary ceilings. Rather than competing with one another for shares of a set budget, the policy under McNamara put the services in the position of pitting their professional views against the judgments and methods of analysis of their civilian superiors. The positions of the services gradually improved as they responded to the need to develop their own experts in systems analysis to better communicate (and compete) with the civilians in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). The services also had an incentive to compromise and to support one another as the locus of competition changed from among the services to between the services and the secretary of defense and civilians in the OSD.[24]

A sixth trend, partly the result of those previously discussed, is that military officers during the Cold War became increasingly capable of operating at higher levels of the U.S. government and also influential in national security policy matters. This was partially a product of staff with greater experience working in more senior positions in the interagency arena. Goldwater-Nichols contributed to this trend. The legislation created additional billets in which officers would serve at the political-military nexus, and the career incentives it created encouraged some of the most promising military officers to pursue joint opportunities that broadened their perspectives early in their careers.[25] Greater experience was complemented by a military education system that began to produce large numbers of officers with advanced civilian university degrees. These advanced degrees became increasingly important to military promotions. In 1965, no members of the JCS had advanced degrees; by 1981, they all did.[26] In addition, senior professional schools (such as the service's war colleges where colonels spend one year of study prior to being eligible for promotion to general or admiral) added study of the nonmilitary aspects of national security to their programs.[27] During the 1990s, a recognition that the national security credentials of the military partners in the civil-military nexus were substantial and growing relative to their civilian counterparts in the executive branch and Congress led some observers to fear a lack of balance in national security decision making.[28]
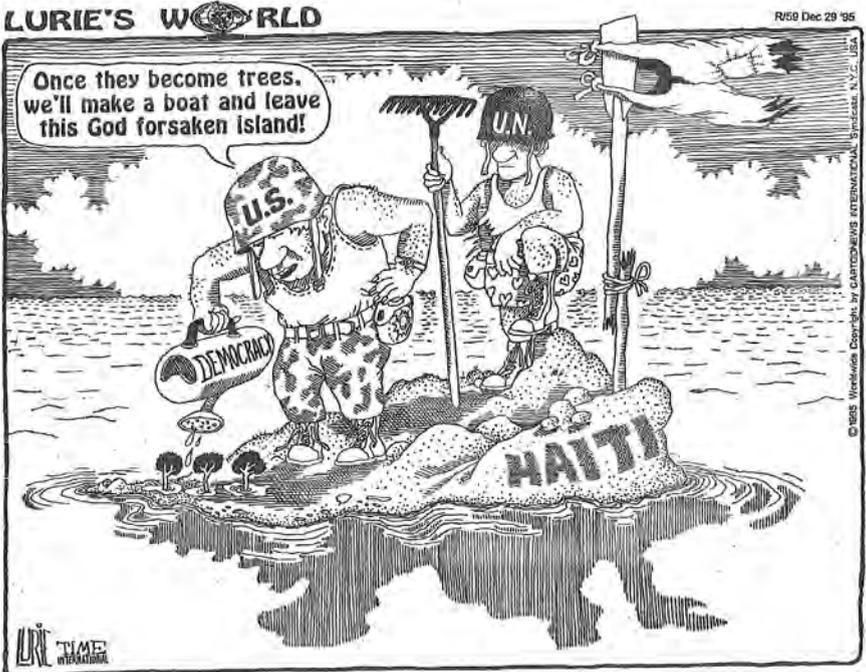
Post–Cold War Issues in American Civil-Military Relations.   As the tensions that had marked the more-than-fifty years of armed standoff between the United States and the Soviet Union receded, the U.S. armed forces once again entered into combat during the Persian Gulf crisis of 1990 and 1991. In those military operations, President George H. W. Bush gave JCS Chairman Powell the

forces he requested and allowed him and the theater commander to conduct the campaign with little detailed political oversight. As an example of his influence, Powell was reportedly instrumental in getting George H. W. Bush to stop the ground war after one hundred hours.[29] The war resulted in a lopsided military victory for the U.S.-led coalition: "In less than six weeks, 795,000 Coalition troops destroyed a defending army of hundreds of thousands, losing only 240 at-tackers."[30] Despite a tremendous military success, however, analysts quickly be-gan to point out failures in planning for war termination and shortcomings in U.S. political achievements as a result of military victory.[31] Consequently, the lessons for U.S. civil-military relations were mixed. Some praised the high de-gree of military professional autonomy evident in the design and conduct of the military campaign, while others argued that greater political involvement—espe-cially in planning for war termination—would have led to a better political out-come for the United States.[32]

As the 1990s progressed, the U.S. military experienced a post–Cold War draw-down as well as increased use of the armed forces for operations other than war. The number of service members on active duty went from 2.1 million in 1990 to 1.4 million in 2000, and this smaller military was operationally deployed to crises that included Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo (see Chapter 3).[33] A further im-portant dynamic was created by the election of Bill Clinton, who served as presi-dent from 1993 through the end of the decade. In general, Clinton and senior members of his administration had little or no military experience, and the presi-dent himself had a reputation for a general lack of interest in military affairs as well as a personal lack of regard for the military.[34]

Civil-Military Relations in the 1990s.   Two main issues dominated discussions of U.S. civil-military relations in the 1990s. The first centered on the idea, prima-rily among some academics and journalists, that there was a "crisis" of civilian control. Concern stemmed from the continued size and influence of the U.S. mil-itary, as well as anecdotal evidence, including incidents that indicated that the pro-fessional military lacked appropriate respect for Clinton as commander in chief; increased partisan identification among military officers; and increased influence by powerful JCS chairmen, particularly Powell.[35]

Some observers attributed perceptions of a crisis to timing; an administration that suffered from a lack of credibility in military affairs came into office at the same time that the JCS had a particularly popular and activist chairman in the per-son of Powell. Others emphasized structural factors, to include a concern that Goldwater-Nichols had centralized too much power in the chairman and the JCS.[36] A third potential source of friction was the nature of the missions assigned to the military in the 1990s, missions that the services did not necessarily view as core tasks and in which decisive victory could not be the goal.[37] However, con-sensus about the seriousness of the problem was never reached, with most ana-lysts agreeing that claims of a crisis were exaggerated.[38] Even during the Clinton administration, at least one observer saw the balance being restored during the tenures of successive chairmen of the JCS.[39]

LURIE'S WORLD   R/59 Dec 29 '95

Once they become trees, we'll make a boat and leave this God forsaken island!

U.S.

U.N.

DEMOCRACY

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One enduring issue that stems from the 1990s crisis debate relates to political behavior by serving or retired members of the military. For example, despite the fact that he had approval from his civilian superiors at the time, analysts debate the appropriateness of Powell's publication of his views on intervention in the Balkans in the *New York Times* and his views on the use of military power in *Foreign Affairs*.[40] As a practical matter, the first of these articles in particular had the potential to constrain the next president's freedom of action on an important foreign policy issue. Other forms of political behavior included the increasingly public and occasionally political roles played by retired generals or admirals. One example is retired admiral and former chairman of the JCS William Crowe's endorsement of candidate Clinton in the 1992 presidential campaign. After Clinton was elected, he appointed Crowe to the position of ambassador to the United Kingdom. This politicization issue resurfaced in 2006, as a number of retired flag officers called for the resignation of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld.[41] Although some believe that such statements by retired flag officers serve an important function in better informing Congress and the American public, who have limited access or knowledge of such views, others argue that the continued association of these senior officers with the active military makes their public critiques of policy and civilian policy makers dangerous to civil-military relations.[42] Taken as a whole, the political activities

discussed here raise concerns about an erosion of the tradition of military neutrality and abstention from politics.[43]

The second and more serious major issue in U.S. civil-military relations that surfaced during the 1990s was the possibility of a growing gap between the all-volunteer, professional military and the rest of American society. Scholars examining this issue posed their research question this way: "Has a 'gap' in values between the armed forces and civilian society widened to the point of threatening the effectiveness of the military and impeding civil-military cooperation?"[44] Research confirmed that, over the preceding generation, the proportion of officers that self-identified as Republican had increased from 33% to 64% and that other important differences between officers as a group and civilians existed: Officers were more conservative than civilian elites but not than the general American public, officers were somewhat more religious than civilian elites, officers expressed skepticism about the quality of political leadership and were hostile to the media but expressed more trust in government institutions than their civilian counterparts, and officers were much more hostile than civilians to the notion of homosexuals serving openly in the U.S. military.[45] A particular source of concern was that a sample of successful midgrade officers believed that they should "insist" (rather than merely advise) on "'setting rules of engagement' (50 percent), developing an 'exit strategy' (52 percent), and 'deciding what kinds of military units (air vs. naval, heavy vs. light) will be used to accomplish all tasks' (63 percent)."[46] Those who ascribed salience to a growing civil-military gap in general did not argue that it rose to the level of a crisis, but rather that indicators of a gap were worthy of more attention by senior civilian and military leaders responsible for the relationship.

Civil-Military Relations During the Administration of President George W. Bush. In contrast to the civil-military relations of the 1990s that generated concerns about outsized military influence, U.S. civil-military relations in the first decade of the twenty-first century generated concerns about lack of balance in the opposite direction.[47] When Rumsfeld, who had served a previous tour as secretary of defense under President Gerald Ford, reassumed that office in January 2001, he had a definite agenda: Two of his priorities were transformation of the military and the assertion (or reassertion) of stronger control of the OSD over the services in the Pentagon, as well as stronger civilian control over the military. Rumsfeld's transformation agenda drew upon considerable military thinking about an ongoing "Revolution in Military Affairs" based on high-technology, precision, standoff weapons systems and information dominance (see Chapter 3 and Chapter 15). The priority on reestablishing civilian control seemed to draw on a belief that the defense establishment "had become too independent and risk-averse during eight years under President Bill Clinton."[48] Rumsfeld pursued his definite agenda with a high degree of personal self-confidence and aggressiveness—a personality sometimes described as domineering or arrogant. Though praised by JCS Chairman Richard Myers as having healthy relationships with senior officers and the joint staff, Rumsfeld was described by many others as "frequently abusive and

indecisive, trusting only a tiny circle of close advisers, seemingly eager to slap down officers with decades of distinguished service."[49]

One of Rumsfeld's first tasks at the Pentagon was the Quadrennial Defense Review of 2001. This process generated such tension between Rumsfeld and the services, as well as between Rumsfeld and Congress, that there was speculation that Rumsfeld could be the first member of George W. Bush's cabinet to depart.[50] However, this dynamic was completely altered by the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, and the apparent success of the subsequent invasion of Afghanistan. This U.S. and coalition campaign appeared to validate Rumsfeld's intensely hands-on management style because he had influenced the campaign plan significantly, and his transformation agenda focused on the conduct of a more high-tech form of warfare.[51]

Despite vast budget increases in the wake of 9/11, relations between Rumsfeld and senior military leaders continued to deteriorate during the planning stages of the war in Iraq and after the invasion in 2003. A public incident related to testimony given by Army Chief of Staff Eric Shinseki before the Senate Armed Services Committee in February 2003, when he was asked for his estimate of the forces that would be required to stabilize Iraq after an invasion. His ultimate advice of "several hundred thousand" drew official and public repudiations from Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, Rumsfeld, and Vice President Dick Cheney.[52] The reaction of these senior civilian leaders to Shinseki's testimony implied a war-planning process for Iraq that did not include broad and open consultations with senior military leaders. Although Shinseki was not in the operational chain of command, as the Army's chief of staff he would be responsible for supporting the combatant commander's force requirements and sustainment needs. The fact that this incident was followed by an early leak of Shinseki's intended replacement indicated an effort by civilian leaders to further diminish his status and to signal an expectation of silence to other senior military figures.[53]

One notable characteristic of the planning stages of the Iraq invasion was Rumsfeld's active intervention in operational and logistical details.[54] The most striking was his decision to remove specific units from the Time-Phased Force Deployment List (TPFDL), a technical document that governs the flow of forces and necessary logistical support as they deploy into a theater of operations. Even a defender of Rumsfeld's role in the process, Mackubin Owens, argues that, in retrospect, Rumsfeld's decision to remove a cavalry division from the TPFDL was a mistake. His explanation, however, is even more interesting from the perspective of civil-military relations: "Rumsfeld was inclined to interpret the Army's call for a larger force to invade Iraq as just one more example of what he perceived as foot dragging. . . . he had come to believe that the TPFDL . . . had become little more than a bureaucratic tool that the services used to protect their shares of the defense budget."[55] If this assessment is correct, it suggests that use-of-force decision making was severely inhibited by the lack of a constructive civil-military partnership characterized by trust and mutual respect.

The failures in planning and adaptability, which led to serious U.S. difficulties in post-invasion Iraq, were undoubtedly complex and occurred at many levels. Current histories are too plentiful to adequately survey here, and the evidence supporting such assessments will probably improve as time provides additional perspective.[56] However, the view that at least a portion of the problems in post-invasion Iraq can be attributed to unhealthy civil-military relations has been supported by the 2006 Iraq Study Group, which found:

> The U.S. military has a long tradition of strong partnership between the civilian leadership of the Department of Defense and the uniformed services. Both have long benefited from a relationship in which the civilian leadership exercises control with the advantage of fully candid professional advice, and the military serves loyally with the understanding that its advice has been heard and valued. That tradition has been frayed, and civil-military relations need to be repaired.[57]

The report went on to recommend that "the new Secretary of Defense should make every effort to build healthy civil-military relations, by creating an environment in which the senior military feel free to offer independent military advice not only to the civilian leadership in the Pentagon but also to the President and the National Security Council, as envisioned in the Goldwater-Nichols legislation."[58]

Perhaps contrary to expectations, the role of the military in the national security process has continued to grow—and to grow increasingly complex—in the post–Cold War world. A debate over whether the military has exercised an appropriate level of influence in the appropriate venues of national security policy continues, and a stable equilibrium remains elusive.

The Current Structure of the National Military Establishment

Although Goldwater-Nichols has been less than fully successful in breaking service dominance in the development and funding of military programs, the legislation is generally viewed as having been very successful in improving "the areas that the original sponsors of the Goldwater-Nichols Act considered most pressing—military advice, the unified commanders, contingency planning, joint officer management, and military operations."[59] Such success is due in part to an organizational structure that places a premium on military effectiveness through efficient planning and coordination. (For the structure of DoD, see Figure 4.4 in Chapter 4.)

With the establishment of U.S. Africa Command in 2007 (see Figure 8.1), six combatant commands now have responsibility for specified regions of the globe while four other combatant commands are assigned worldwide functional responsibilities not bounded by geography. The regional combatant commanders seek to address a wide variety of security-related needs depending on the region of concern. Meeting these demands requires extensive coordination within the U.S. government as well as the maintenance of a direct line of communication with their chains of command, which include the secretary of defense and the president (with communications generally flowing through the JCS).

FIG. 8.1   Area of Responsibility of Africa Command
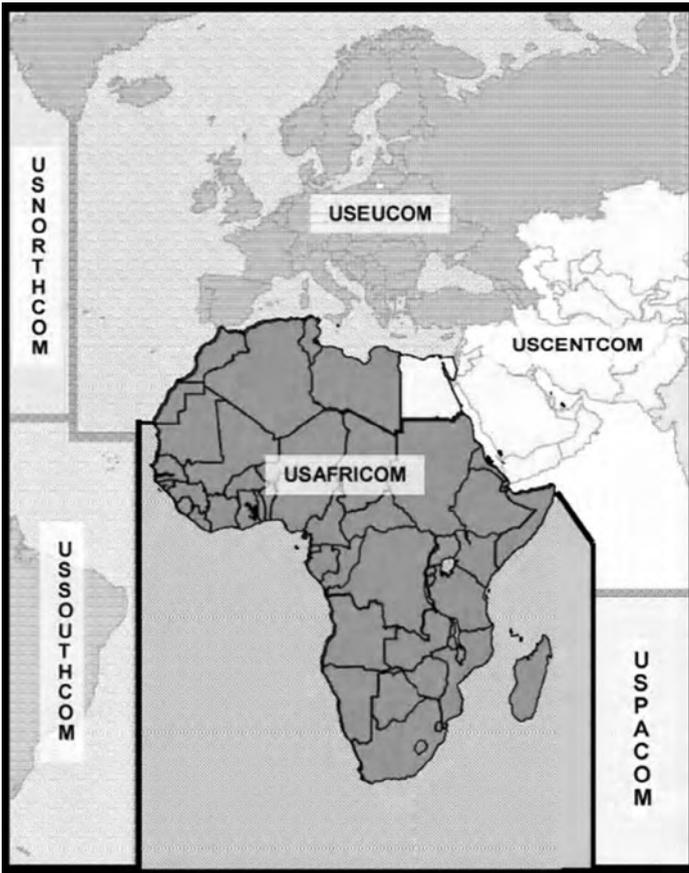
Although the combatant commanders are given wide areas of responsibility, their success hinges upon close interaction and coordination with the individual services. The services themselves (Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps) are responsible for training, equipping, maintaining, and providing the forces that are, or may be, assigned to the combatant commands and then supporting them for the duration of their deployments; however, they have little direct influence in the conduct of operations, except through their service chiefs as part of the JCS.

The JCS, consisting of the chairman, vice chairman, and service chiefs, play a preeminent role in coordinating actions among the individual services and the unified combatant commands. Because the service chiefs also sit as members of the JCS and have the statutory authority to provide expert advice, they are the natural links between the services and the combatant commands. The JCS is also a

critical nexus of interaction between civilian policy makers and the uniformed military.

Within the DoD, the OSD plays a prominent role in defining and overseeing national security and military policy. Internal DoD directives mandate that "in providing immediate staff assistance and advice to the Secretary of Defense, the OSD and the JCS, though separately identified and organized, function in full co-ordination and cooperation."[60] This requirement is intended to enhance civilian control as well as to ensure that the secretary of defense receives the best possible staff products and advice. Normally, the OSD has a number of exceptionally qualified military officers aboard, as well as talented civilians.

Locating the Military's Role in National Security

There is fundamental agreement on at least one point: In the United States, civilian control—or, perhaps more precisely, democratic political control—is accepted as the central, guiding principle. The U.S. military is subordinate to the president and to certain designated officials in the executive branch, as well as to elected political leaders in Congress. According to the U.S. Constitution, the executive and the legislative branches of the federal government share authority and responsibility for military affairs.

Despite a broad consensus on this issue, there is nevertheless plenty of room for disagreement on more subtle points. Issues that are still under debate include whether there are any appropriate prudential limits to civilian involvement in the formulation and execution of military policy, strategy, and operations; the appropriate role and relative influence of Congress in military policy and strategy; and the appropriate extent and exercise of military influence during the formulation and execution of national security policy. Although there is no serious concern over a military coup or military revolt in the United States, not all important issues in American civil-military relations are settled. The optimal pattern of U.S. civil-military relations would ensure democratic political control while also facilitating sound strategic decision making and the creation of effective military institutions.[61]

The "Purist" Vs. "Fusionist" Schools of Thought.   As has often been observed, the American military is far from monolithic in character or in outlook. One of the recurring differences since World War II has been over the military's appropriate role in the formulation and execution of national security policy. General Matthew Ridgway, Army chief of staff in 1955, expressed the traditional, *military purist* point of view:

> The military advisor should give his competent professional advice based on the military aspects of the programs referred to him, based on his fearless, honest, objective estimate of the national interest, and regardless of administration policy at any particular time. He should confine his advice to the essential military aspects.[62]

The purist case does not necessarily deny the complexity of national security issues; they are recognized to be a blend of economic, political, and military

components, but they are determined by civilian policy makers. The professional officer is only an expert in the military component. In providing advice to policy makers, therefore, professional officers should confine themselves to purely military considerations. In this view, officers are not competent, nor should they be asked, to provide economic or political judgments or assumptions in offering advice.

The alternate view, the *fusionist* approach, maintains that in the changed environment of national security policy in the post–World War II environment, purely military considerations do not exist.[63] In a world of global terrorism and proliferating weapons of mass destruction, in which the military consumes significant economic resources and in which the use of force may have tremendous political implications, military decisions inevitably have considerable economic and political consequences and vice versa. Therefore, in giving their advice, professional officers should incorporate political and economic considerations along with military factors.

Many civilian and military leaders have tended to be fusionists. President John Kennedy explicitly espoused the fusionist thesis in a speech to graduating West Point cadets when, after stressing future military command responsibilities, he added:

> The non-military problems which you will face will also be the most demanding— diplomatic, political, economic. You will need to know and understand not only the foreign policy of the United States, but the foreign policy of all countries scattered around the world. You will need to understand the importance of military power and also the limits of military power. You will have an obligation to deter war as well as to fight it.[64]

Taylor, former chairman of the JCS and military representative to the president, was clear: "Nothing is so likely to repel the civilian decision-makers as a military argument which omits obvious considerations which the president cannot omit . . . if they (the Joint Chiefs) want to persuade the President, they had better look at the totality of his problem and try to give maximum help."[65]

This debate was held among scholars as well as practitioners. Perhaps the foremost critic of fusionism was Samuel P. Huntington, who warns in *The Soldier and the State* (1957) that if the military "broadened" its professional worldview to incorporate civilian-defined "political realities," it might gain access to supreme levels of the policy process, but it would no longer speak on strategic matters from an adequately military perspective. The country and the national security process would be better served by a military that cultivated its autonomous ethic in a politically neutral, professional institution. In return, the state would gain a "politically sterile and neutral" professional officer corps "ready to carry out the wishes of any civilian group which secures legitimate authority within the state."[66] Huntington's analysis is a variation of the purist view, reinforced by a dose of cultural isolation.

A leading advocate of fusionism was Morris Janowitz, who lays out his perspective in *The Professional Soldier* (1960).[67] In contrast to Huntington's view on professional autonomy and a degree of separation, Janowitz believed it would be unrealistic to rely on an apolitical and relatively detached military to ensure political

control: "In the United States, where political leadership is diffuse, civilian politicians have come to assume that the military will be an active ingredient in decision-making about national security."[68] To be effective during the Cold War, the U.S. military would have to be aware of the international political consequences of military action and understand the primacy of political objectives and the occasional need for limited applications of force.[69]

In practice, both the purist and the fusionist perspectives have shortcomings. The purist perspective tends to posit a degree of separation between political and military affairs that simply does not and cannot exist. As military theorist Carl von Clausewitz argues in his *On War*, at the highest level of decision making, the idea of a "purely military" opinion makes no sense, because "no major proposal for war can be worked out in ignorance of political factors." He goes on to argue, "To bring a war, or one of its campaigns, to a successful close requires a thorough grasp of national policy. On that level strategy and policy coalesce."[70] It is unhelpful for officers to expect that there will bright lines between political and military issues. A second challenge is that a purist perspective may tend to foster a conception of military expertise that is inadequately narrow. For example, an Army that focuses primarily on fighting and winning major conventional wars may well have difficulty achieving military and political objectives in other environments that demand a broader array of skills.[71]

The fusionist perspective may lead to the opposite challenge—a vanishing professional ethos and loss of clarity with regard to core military tasks. The military's functional expertise as prioritized by the purists, and the military's political sophistication and responsiveness as emphasized by the fusionists, are complementary values, yet ones that are always in tension. Within that tension, a circumscribed sphere of professional autonomy within which the military can develop its ethos and practical expertise will be necessary to ensure the military's functional effectiveness as an instrument of national security policy.

Guiding the Partners' Behavior in Civil-Military Relations.   In the United States, the military's leaders are not asked by their political superiors when and where to wage war. Rather, they are asked how the military instrument can be used most effectively at a particular time for a given strategic purpose. In 1983, the JCS was not asked whether the United States should take up peacekeeping duties in Lebanon or evict the communists from Grenada but rather how to accomplish those missions. Similarly, in 2001, George W. Bush and Rumsfeld did not ask the JCS or the combatant commander whether the United States should invade Afghanistan but only for proposals as to how.

An understanding of the military's role in the national security policy process must be grounded with this fact clearly in mind: The American military lacks the charter, the inclination, and the opportunity to play the *primary* role in the establishment of strategic ends. Nevertheless, the military can be influential, albeit largely indirectly, at the most senior levels: "The potential impact of the chiefs' views on the public and the Congress can never be ignored by a president or a secretary of defense. . . . The chiefs no doubt retain power to influence national

decisions to some degree on some security issues, and to add legitimacy to one view or another."[72]

Although the Goldwater-Nichols legislation is credited with strengthening civilian control of the military, the preceding discussion underscores the challenges still associated with having a professional officer corps deeply involved in the planning and execution of national security policy. As a result, a fundamental question arises: "How can trusting relationships between the civil and military authorities that result in effective policy be cultivated?"[73] One answer is a guiding set of principles, or norms, that govern the behavior of both military and civilian leaders in the formulation and execution of national security policy.

According to one analyst, "The military profession's first obligation is to do no harm to the states' democratic institutions and the democratic policymaking processes they establish. The civilian political leadership sets political objectives that the military supports in good faith. The military leadership should apply its expertise without 'shirking' or taking actions that, in effect, have a self-interested effect on policy outcomes."[74] This means that there are three primary functions in which the military should participate:

- Military leaders should always represent the uniquely military perspective in all policy deliberations and discussions, both public and private.

- When asked for their professional opinions and advice, military leaders must render such advice forthrightly and apolitically.

- Once national level policy has been formulated and announced, whether it be a budget, a strategy, or an operational concept, it is the responsibility of military leaders to execute all legal orders from competent authority to execute such policy successfully.

Establishing and gaining adherence to norms that ought to govern civilian behavior presents different challenges. Competitively selected military officers stay on continuous active duty for up to thirty-five years, practicing their military arts daily whether in peace or war, advancing through several levels of professional military education, and constantly adapting new professional knowledge to their experiences. On the civilian side, however, leaders are elected or appointed only episodically. Few, if any, serve a full career in the national security arena, and often the senior civilian leadership changes entirely with changes in presidential administrations. Although this is by design under the U.S. constitutional system, it also has immense drawbacks.

One such drawback is the general lack of familiarity among civilian leaders with national security affairs at the beginning of each new presidential administration.[75] Civilian political leaders come into the policymaking arena essentially cold on the issues and without the extensive personal networks necessary to create effective security policy on a global scale. Although this is normally largely overcome within a year or so, during this period, military advisors are far more knowledgeable. Such situations require personal relationships to be developed at

each level of civil-military interface in which trust and comity are sought, in which mutual exploration of policy and learning can occur, and in which sound policy can be constructed and vetted appropriately.

Although the civil-military dialogue will always be "unequal" in that civilians have the last word, it is possible to conceive of norms to govern civilian behavior in the civil-military relationship in the interest of facilitating effective policy making. One scholar has wisely articulated the principal norm for civilian leaders to follow as "equal dialogue, unequal authority."[76] Civilian leaders ultimately responsible for critical national security decisions are more likely to be successful if they are aware of the full range of military views on a particular issue. An "equal dialogue" should be employed to support the civilian decision makers' "unequal authority." Clearly, this norm has too often been ignored, most recently during Rumsfeld's tenure.[77] The adoption of such a norm would be facilitated by the intentional preparation of civilians for leadership within the national military establishment. One modest proposal would be to open the military war colleges to large numbers of civilians from the intelligence, diplomatic, and congressional staff communities.[78]

Looking Ahead

The role of the uniformed military in the national security process will undoubtedly continue to evolve and fluctuate with changes in civilian leadership and changes in the use of the military as an instrument of foreign policy. Because the United States is likely to remain a world power deeply involved in the international political system, it is highly unlikely that the impact of the military will ever again be as insignificant as it was prior to Pearl Harbor. Ensuring that the future military role in the national security process is both effective and appropriate will be a continuing challenge.

Discussion Questions

1. How and why did the extent of military influence increase significantly immediately prior to and through World War II?

2. How did changes in U.S. foreign policy following World War II influence the restructuring of the national security establishment?

3. How does organizational structure and statutory guidance influence the military's participation in the policy process?

4. How did the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 alter the role of the military in the policy process?

5. What are the responsibilities of the military departments and the combatant commands? What is the role of the chairman of the JCS and the collective JCS in the relationships among these entities?

6. What have been the consequences of an increased centralization of decision making in the DoD?

7. Do you believe that U.S. civil-military relations are healthy? Why or why not?

8. What is the *proper* role of the military in the policy process?

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