

Military Intelligence

THROUGHOUT its history, the United States has maintained an intelligence capability principally to meet the needs of its military. These needs have been, and are today, wide-ranging and substantial. They include information on the size, capabilities, location, disposition, and plans of foreign military forces, as well as information about foreign countries and events in foreign countries required to plan for and carry out military operations.

A variety of intelligence organizations help to meet these needs. Producing military intelligence analysis is chiefly the responsibility of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), the intelligence elements of the military services and the Unified Commands, and tactical intelligence units organic to the fighting forces. Other intelligence organizations (e.g., the National Security Agency, the Central Imagery Office, and the Central Intelligence Agency) also make significant contributions by providing support to current operations.

Together these organizations provide a broad range of support. They advise defense policymakers on political-military matters, major acquisitions, and force planning. They provide threat projections that guide the military services in how best to “organize, train, and equip” their forces, and warn of potential crises. Finally, they support the employment of the armed forces across a broad continuum of operations, from disaster relief, to peace-keeping, to combat operations. The principal consumers of such information are U.S. combat forces, the military departments, the Secretary of Defense, and the President, but those responsible for foreign policymaking often have need for such information as well.

This chapter examines the organizational arrangements for carrying out the military intelligence mission. To understand these arrangements, however, it is necessary to appreciate in general terms how the Department of Defense itself is organized.

DoD Organization and Mission

The Department of Defense (DoD) was created by law in 1949. It comprises the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the military departments, 16 “defense agencies” which were created by the Secretary of Defense to perform particular functions, and nine “Unified Commands” responsible for the conduct of military operations.

The Secretary of Defense exercises direction and control over all elements of the Department. He has responsibility for setting policy, allocating resources, and monitoring compliance with policy and resource decisions, as well as for functioning in the chain of command for military operations. The Office of the Secretary contains numerous staff elements under civilian managers who assist the Secretary in carrying out his responsibilities in particular functional areas.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) consists of the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and the senior military officers of the services—the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps.

The Joint Staff, which reports to the Chairman, assists the Secretary in developing doctrine, tactics, and procedures for the operational employment of the military forces and advises the Secretary on actual operations.

The military departments (Army, Navy, and Air Force), each under the authority of a civilian Secretary, report directly to the Secretary of Defense. They are responsible for “organizing, training, and equipping” their respective forces.

The 16 defense agencies (e.g., the Defense Logistics Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the Defense Investigative Service) provide specialized support to the Secretary and other elements of the Department in various areas (e.g., research and development, intelligence, security).

Each of the Unified Commands operates under the authority of a commander-in-chief (CINC), who is responsible to the Secretary of Defense for the conduct of all military operations within his respective geographic or functional area. Some military operations are conducted under the authority of a commander of a joint task force (JTF), commands created and tailored by the CINC for a particular operation.

Ultimate responsibility for operational control of the military forces rests with the President and Secretary of Defense who receive advice and assistance from the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 designated the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as the principal military adviser to the President, Secretary of Defense, and National Security Council.¹ While the CINCs are directly responsible to the Secretary for the conduct of military operations, the Chairman of the JCS is responsible, together with the CINCs, for developing plans, strategies, and military doctrine to govern joint warfighting, and for making resource recommendations to the Secretary of Defense where joint warfighting capabilities are involved. The military services retain their responsibility to “organize, train, and equip” their forces, including those comprising the Unified Commands.

The deployments of U.S. military forces since the enactment of Goldwater-Nichols—from combat to humanitarian missions—have led to numerous changes in the organizational structure to support the needs of joint warfighting. In particular, the focus on joint operations has made clear the need for common tactics, techniques, and procedures among the military services.

Organization of Military Intelligence

The organization of military intelligence has evolved principally to serve its various users in the execution of their responsibilities.

Within the Office of the Secretary of Defense, **the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence (ASD(C³I))** provides the principal staff support to the Secretary for executing his functions with regard to intelligence, i.e.,

¹ Public Law 99-433. The Act, among other reforms, created the position of the Vice Chairman, JCS.

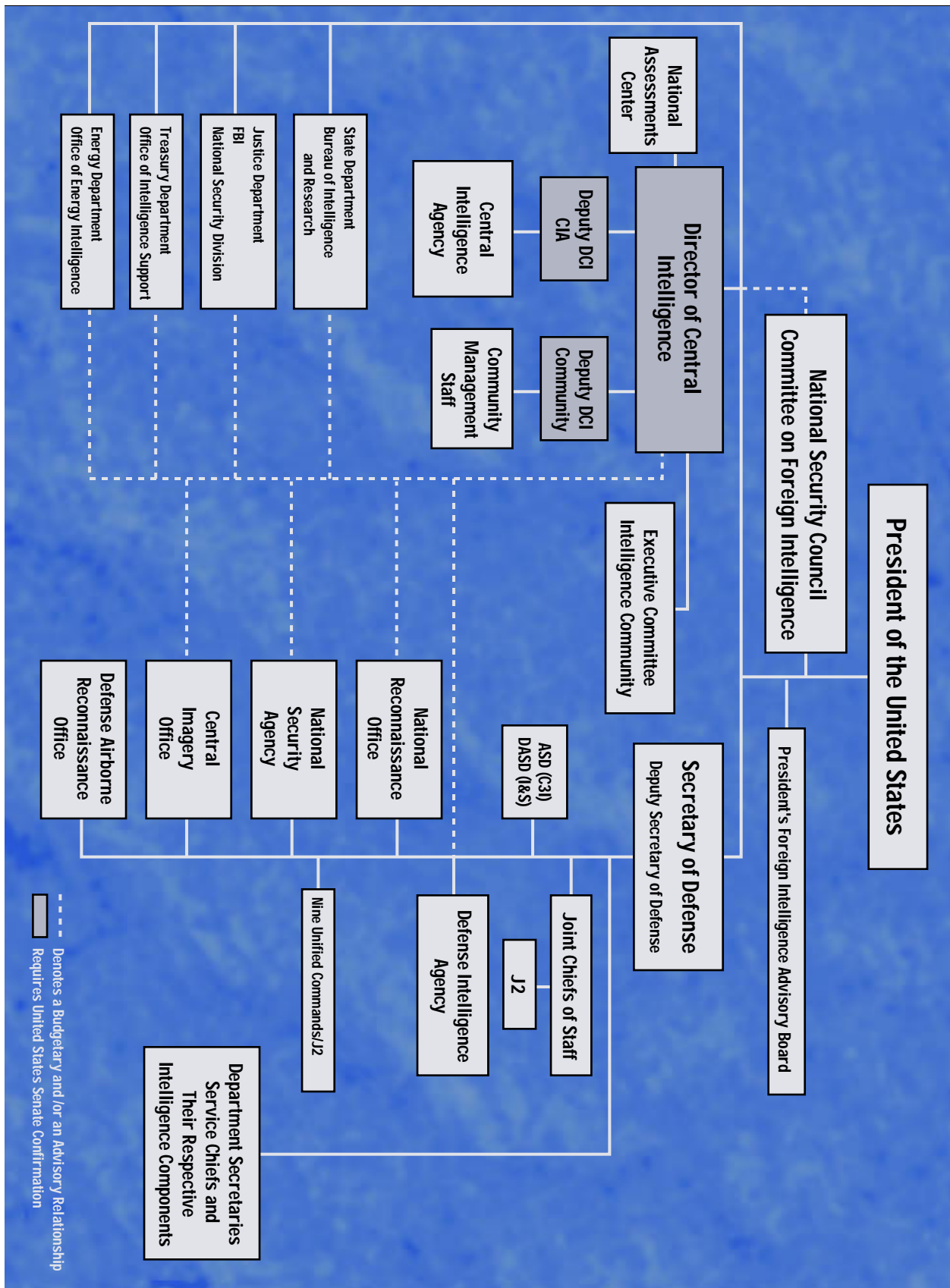


Figure 10:1

Organization of Military Intelligence

developing and monitoring compliance with policy and allocating resources. In 1993, the **Defense Airborne Reconnaissance Office (DARO)** was established within the office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology to develop and acquire manned and unmanned airborne reconnaissance systems.

Substantive analytical support for the Secretary, his staff, and the Unified Commands is provided principally by the **Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA)**, whose Director is appointed by, and reports to, the Secretary. DIA was created in 1961 to provide current intelligence to all of DoD, consolidate analysis on general military topics being performed by each of the military departments, coordinate DoD's contribution to national intelligence estimates, confirm the needs of DoD components for intelligence, and coordinate the performance of common functions. Over the years, however, DIA's responsibilities have progressively expanded.

Today, DIA supports the Secretary and his staff by providing substantive intelligence support for the execution of many of their key functions, from decisions regarding the use of military force, to major acquisition decisions, and to their dealings with foreign counterparts.

The Director of DIA also reports to the Chairman, JCS, both in his capacity as head of a "combat support agency" and as the Chairman's principal intelligence adviser. Because there is no intelligence staff officer on the Joint Staff *per se*, the Director of DIA fulfills this function, delegating day-to-day responsibility to a subordinate officer whose title is "**Director for Intelligence, J-2.**" This officer supports the Chairman, JCS, the Joint Staff, and the Secretary with current global intelligence on situations that may require U.S. military involvement. DIA also provides intelligence support to the military departments by producing independent assessments of foreign military capabilities that assist the departments—who also undertake such assessments—in organizing, training, and equipping their forces.

DIA manages certain department-wide intelligence activities. Its National Military Intelligence Collection Center confirms the need for intelligence requirements levied by Defense customers. DIA also establishes overall priorities for intelligence-gathering by national systems to satisfy military requirements. In war or crisis, authority to task these national systems passes to the Secretary of Defense, and DIA acts as the focal point for such tasking. DIA also manages the Defense Attache System and the recently created Defense HUMINT Service, and it coordinates intelligence analysis and production among the military departments and Unified Commands.

Finally, DIA fills several key roles in the Intelligence Community. Its Director is responsible for putting together a consolidated budget for "general" defense intelligence activities within the National Foreign Intelligence Program, and administers the office which oversees intelligence collection for the purpose of obtaining measurements and other physical data (MASINT).

The organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has taken a more active role in intelligence matters in recent years. This is, in part, a result of the new roles assigned to the Chairman, JCS, by the Goldwater-Nichols Act, and in part to the increasing role "national" intelligence systems (i.e., imagery satellites and SIGINT systems) play in

supporting military operations. To help prepare the Chairman's annual recommendation to the Secretary of Defense on resource allocation, the JCS has established a process that examines how intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities contribute to joint warfighting.

The JCS has also taken a more active role in developing intelligence systems "architectures" and doctrine for the Unified Commands, to ensure that intelligence capabilities at both the national and tactical levels are interoperable and can be used effectively in the planning and execution of military operations. Recent technological advances have made it possible for commanders to receive "real-time" reporting from national collection systems, target their weapons more effectively, and assess the damage inflicted. Real-time knowledge of the size, location, movement, and capabilities of enemy and friendly air, sea, and ground forces throughout the combat zone and beyond, will provide a crucial advantage to U.S. forces, allowing them to dominate the conflict. Fewer resources will be needed and fewer casualties incurred.

At each of the **Unified Commands**, activities comparable to those performed at the national level are underway. The command's intelligence staff officer ("J-2") is charged with developing plans, programs, and architectures to ensure that intelligence capabilities are available, interoperable, and can be employed in support of joint operations. Utilizing a concept successfully employed during Operation Desert Shield/Storm, **Joint Intelligence Centers (JICs)** have been established within each command to serve as the focal point for tasking national and tactical intelligence collectors. The JICs also provide analysis tailored to the needs of the CINC, his staff, and subordinate commanders.

The **military departments** continue to maintain extensive collection and analysis capabilities to support their departmental functions (e.g., acquiring weapons systems, training personnel, and developing military service doctrine). They also provide tactical intelligence support on the battlefield or at sea.

How This Structure Performs

The Commission attempted to assess this complex structure by reviewing the recent reports on the subject, interviewing practitioners and consumers at all levels, and visiting numerous military commands and Defense facilities.

We found that military intelligence has not lost its principal focus on providing the best possible support to the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who may be put in harm's way. We also found that military commanders have become more knowledgeable about national and tactical intelligence capabilities, and more intent on integrating those capabilities into all phases of their operations. Technical advances in computing and communications have made such integration possible.

DIA has made substantial progress toward reducing duplication in military analysis and production, long seen as a substantial problem. Its National Military Intelligence Production Center assigns responsibility for analysis to the analytical components in the military services and the Joint Intelligence Centers, and then monitors production to prevent overlap. Yet problems in military analysis and production remain.

DIA is the largest analytical organization, created originally to consolidate the separate analytical efforts of the military departments on general military topics. The analytical components of the military departments were expected to provide intelligence support to acquisition and training, especially the scientific and technical expertise required to satisfy the unique needs of their respective departments. Each service, in fact, maintains a large intelligence element to provide this service-specific analytical support.² Large analytical elements also exist at the Joint Intelligence Centers of each Unified Command that provide tailored analysis to the CINC within his theater of operations. Smaller analytical elements still exist at subordinate commands within theaters.

The Commission does not dispute the need for these analytical organizations. Each appears to serve a legitimate function. The Commission is concerned, however, by the large size of these organizations as well as with what appears to be the tendency to exceed their core missions. The dividing line between DIA's analytical responsibilities and those of the military departments remains blurred despite the agreed-on production process described above. The Commission also found in the course of its visits to overseas commands that some analytical elements were collecting and analyzing information on political and economic topics that appeared to exceed the scope of their missions.

The Commission had neither the resources nor the time to make a detailed evaluation of these issues, but believes such an assessment is needed.

10-1. The Commission recommends that the Secretary of Defense undertake a comprehensive examination of the analytical and production organizations within DoD, including DIA and the production elements within the military services and Unified Commands, to eliminate unnecessary overlap, to ensure consistency with the core missions of each organization, and to determine the proper size and resources these organizations require.

Problems also are apparent in other areas. Responsibility for allocating resources to military intelligence programs is diffused, and budget decisions are not always made with a clear understanding of how total capabilities will be affected. (The Commission's proposed budget realignment discussed in Chapter 7 addresses this issue.) Interoperability problems still exist between intelligence systems developed by each of the military services and agencies. Dissemination systems are not fully adequate to support deployed forces, and because collection capabilities are increasing, the pressure on both tactical and national processing capabilities is certain to grow. Satellite collection systems and precision weapon systems still need to be fully integrated so that a tactical commander can train with them in peacetime and utilize them in combat. Computer simulations to assess the performance and cost-effectiveness of intelligence capabilities are limited, and such tools also are needed for joint exercise support. Intelligence support for coalition forces or multinational organizations with which U.S. forces may operate also needs improvement. (This topic is discussed further in Chapter 12.)

² The Army element is the National Ground Intelligence Center; the Navy element, the National Maritime Intelligence Center; the Air Force element, the National Air Intelligence Center; and the Marine Corps element, the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity.

Possible Organizational Improvements

With responsibility for military intelligence dispersed among the staff of the Secretary of Defense, the military departments, the JCS, the Unified Commands, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and other national intelligence components located in the Department of Defense (e.g., the National Security Agency, Central Imagery Office), it is not surprising that a variety of joint programs and other types of hybrid management arrangements have been created to accommodate the equities involved. A multitude of boards, working groups, committees and review groups also have been created to coordinate intelligence activities. Some, such as the Military Intelligence Board, an informal committee consisting of representatives of the key intelligence elements, appear to play a valuable coordinating role. In other cases, the multitude of coordinating mechanisms seems to stifle progress.

To improve the civilian management of military intelligence, the Commission considered the desirability of a separate Assistant Secretary of Defense for Intelligence. Under current law, the Secretary of Defense is authorized to have either an Assistant Secretary for C³I (the existing arrangement), or a separate Assistant Secretary for Intelligence, as long as the total number of assistant secretaries does not exceed the number allowed by law. Those who favor separation contend that the responsibilities of the Secretary for intelligence are so numerous and demanding that a full-time assistant secretary is needed. Others contend that combining the responsibility for intelligence with the responsibility for command, control, and communications makes sense because for intelligence to be effective, it must be closely associated with the C³ functions. ***The Commission believes that the decision to continue the present arrangement or to create a separate Assistant Secretary of Defense for Intelligence should be left with each Secretary. There is, however, a clear need to integrate intelligence dissemination systems with command and control networks, whichever structure is chosen.***

At the same time, several witnesses told the Commission that the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for C³I has been less than effective in carrying out its responsibilities. Some attributed this to the office's taking on major responsibilities not directly supporting its command and control, communications and intelligence functions (e.g., overseeing information systems support to DoD as a whole). Others pointed to an inadequate staff capability. In any case, many believe the office should be strengthened.

Some witnesses suggested that the management of military intelligence would be improved if a single authoritative leader (short of the Secretary) were created. In 1995, the Commission on the Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces recommended that a senior military intelligence officer be appointed with authority to review, evaluate, and revise intelligence programs, and to make recommendations to the Secretary of Defense concerning the organization and structure of DoD intelligence activities. That Commission did not suggest who this officer should be or where in the Defense structure he should be located.

This Commission decided against endorsing a single authoritative leader for military intelligence. As noted above, there are several authoritative voices in defense intelligence short of the Secretary. Where authority lies depends on the function involved. Responsibility for developing overall policy and resource recommendations for the

Secretary rests with the ASD(C³I), who is the Secretary's principal staff assistant for intelligence matters. The Director, DIA has overall "corporate" responsibility for intelligence analysis and production as well as Defense-wide coordination functions, such as collection management. The Chairman of the JCS and CINCs are principally responsible for ensuring the intelligence needs of joint warfighters are met. The chiefs of intelligence for each of the military services are responsible for satisfying the intelligence needs of their respective departments. The Commission finds there are valid reasons for maintaining these responsibilities where they currently are lodged. To combine them under a single manager would not improve the quality of intelligence support, but would only complicate the performance of existing roles and responsibilities. Further clarification of roles is desirable, but not further consolidation of functions.

Director for Intelligence (J-2), the Joint Staff

Reflecting the changes to the JCS and Joint Staff brought about by the Goldwater-Nichols Act, the J-2 has assumed a greater role in developing intelligence doctrine and "architectures" to ensure that national and tactical intelligence capabilities can be employed effectively in support of each CINC's responsibilities. He also has assumed principal responsibility for the intelligence aspects of the Chairman's annual report to the Secretary on defense capabilities. Through a working group of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council of the JCS, the J-2 formulates recommendations for the Chairman on proposed capabilities and resources for national and tactical intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance activities funded within the Defense budget. While DIA continues to provide most of the staff support for these functions, the J-2 clearly is being tasked to perform Joint Staff functions beyond the provision of current intelligence.

As noted above, there is no staff officer on the Joint Staff *per se* who deals with intelligence. The officer who serves in this capacity (i.e., as the "J-2") is assigned to DIA and reports to the Chairman, JCS as a *de facto* member of the Joint Staff (as well as to the Director of DIA). His principal duty is to provide current intelligence support (i.e., information on developments that might affect U.S. military interests, and intelligence support to ongoing military operations) to the JCS and to the CINCs. In this capacity, the J-2 manages the National Military Joint Intelligence Center in the Pentagon, staffed by DIA personnel and representatives from other agencies, as well as the DoD global indications and warning system.

During crises and other contingencies involving the deployment or likely deployment of U.S. forces, the J-2 facilitates the flow of intelligence to the CINCs and joint task forces by ensuring that collectors and producers at the national level are responsive to their operational needs. During Desert Storm and subsequent deployments of U.S. forces, he also has served as a principal intelligence spokesman for the Chairman, JCS, providing assessments to the press and/or congressional committees as needed.

No other function on the Joint Staff is performed predominately by staff "on loan" from a Defense agency. The personnel, operations, logistics, communications, planning, and other functions are all carried out by individuals assigned to the Joint Staff.

10-2. The Commission recommends that the “J-2” become a part of the Joint Staff, rather than continue to be part of DIA with responsibilities to both organizations. The J-2 should continue to provide current intelligence to the Chairman, JCS and the CINCs (utilizing support from DIA rather than creating a separate staff organization for this purpose), operate the National Military Joint Intelligence Center, and carry out the JCS-specific functions (e.g., doctrine, reviewing theater architectures, CINC liaison, capabilities assessments, resource recommendations) within the Joint Staff framework. The J-2 should have his own staff, commensurate with Joint Staff manning and resource levels, to carry out these functions.

The Commission’s recommendation would change the responsibilities of the Director of DIA. That agency would focus on producing and managing long-term military intelligence analysis, supporting the intelligence needs of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (including the provision of current intelligence), and managing other Defense-wide military intelligence functions. DIA would continue to provide current intelligence support to the J-2 and provide personnel support for the National Military Joint Intelligence Center, but would no longer perform Joint Staff functions. Its Director would continue to report to the Secretary of Defense and, as head of a combat support agency, to the Chairman, JCS.

Under this arrangement, the J-2 would clearly remain heavily dependent upon DIA’s support. (Indeed, the Commission anticipates no diminution in such support.) It is also important that the J-2 *not* duplicate DIA’s functions by maintaining analytical capabilities beyond what is required to fulfill his responsibilities to support military operations. The Commission leaves to the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman, JCS, issues pertaining to the rank and status of the affected officials.

An Intelligence Systems Architect

However effective collection and analysis may be, intelligence is useless if it does not reach military commanders in a form they can use and at the time they need it. It is imperative, therefore, that intelligence support to military operations be synchronized with global command, control, and communications systems. Dissemination channels for intelligence must be compatible with the information systems of the forces, permitting intelligence to be assimilated immediately for use in targeting and delivering precision weapons.

In this regard, the Commission found that there are still deficiencies that derive from the separate organizations and entities responsible for building the military forces (the services); those responsible for building and operating national systems, especially satellite and airborne collectors (the intelligence agencies); and those responsible for the conduct of military operations (the CINCs). Commanders must be able to control both weapons and sensors in an integrated operation. To this point, they have had to rely on intelligence sensors, communications channels, and weapons that have been developed largely without regard for each other. Military components often still have communications and computer systems that cannot communicate with the joint task force to which they are assigned. While DoD is taking steps to phase out these “legacy” systems to create “seamlessness” across its joint fighting forces, the process is far from complete.

The Commission found no less than nine offices or boards within DoD that asserted responsibility for dealing with all or part of this “architecture” problem. Some were focused on the intelligence side, some on the communications side, and others from the tactical users’ perspective. The impression is one of less than a coherent, unified effort.

10-3. The Commission recommends the appointment of a single systems architect whose function cuts across intelligence, surveillance, and C³, and who closely coordinates with weapon systems designers to achieve a more coherent approach to this critical set of problems.

The responsibilities of the ASD(C³I) come closest to encompassing the various aspects of the architecture problem. He is accountable to the Secretary for the overall supervision of intelligence and C³. While the office is not responsible for weapons’ system design, it is well positioned to affect such coordination. Any actions recommended by this office would also have to be closely coordinated with the JCS to ensure consistency with military operational requirements and with the recommendations developed for the Chairman by the Joint Requirements Oversight Council, as well as with the acquisition elements of the military services and Defense agencies. In this way, the Secretary of Defense would be presented with coherent recommendations regarding the acquisition of intelligence, communications, and weapons systems to best satisfy the needs of joint warfighting.

Clandestine HUMINT Operations

Collecting intelligence through human sources (HUMINT) has been undertaken by elements of military intelligence throughout its history. Recently, military HUMINT activities have included overt intelligence-gathering by military personnel, such as military attaches; collection by special elements in advance of the deployment of U.S. military forces; and, finally, the clandestine recruitment of human sources by military personnel. Prior to 1995, this last aspect of HUMINT collection was undertaken on a limited scale by intelligence elements in each of the military departments. Army intelligence was the most involved, with Air Force and Naval intelligence participating to a lesser degree.

In October 1995, to reduce the cost of four separate military HUMINT organizations and to improve coordination, the operating elements of the military services were combined under the newly created Defense HUMINT Service, managed by the Defense Intelligence Agency. Reportedly, 80 percent of the work of the new service is devoted to overt collection, e.g., collecting publicly available information, attending scientific and professional conferences, and interviewing persons who had access to information of interest, and 20 percent to the development of clandestine human sources. Such operations are carried out by specially-trained military personnel and coordinated with the CIA.

A number of those interviewed by the Commission, including some military officers, urged that the clandestine HUMINT operations of the military services (and now the Defense HUMINT Service) be discontinued and left entirely to the CIA. They contended that over the years such activities have produced little of value and are difficult for the military to conduct. They argue that the cost of maintaining a separate infrastructure to conduct clandestine HUMINT operations is simply not justified by the limited results.

Clearly, the United States needs human intelligence on foreign military forces. Because of their specialized knowledge, military personnel are important to this effort. Few current CIA HUMINT collectors have significant military experience. At the same time, the military faces a number of practical problems in mounting these types of operations. It is difficult to maintain a professional cadre of collectors because military officers usually spend only a few years at a time in HUMINT assignments and then must return to their career track to remain eligible for promotion. HUMINT operations also require a large and complex infrastructure from which to operate, including overseas offices, cover legends, and specialized training.

10-4. The Commission recommends that the clandestine recruitment of human sources, now carried out by active duty military officers assigned to the Defense HUMINT Service, be transferred to the CIA, utilizing military personnel on detail from DoD, as necessary. In carrying out this responsibility, the CIA needs to coordinate closely with the CINCs to ensure that their operational needs are met and that commanders have confidence in the support they are receiving.

The Defense HUMINT Service should remain responsible for the Defense Attache System and for the overt collection of information for military consumers. This recommendation also is not intended to affect clandestine HUMINT activities undertaken by DoD elements in advance of, or as part of, a military operation.

Adoption of this recommendation should provide limited cost savings, but cost savings are not the principal reason for the recommended realignment of functions. Rather, the Commission believes it is more in keeping with the respective roles and comparative advantages of the CIA and the military.

