



A History of National Military Strategy Development in the United States: Turning the Past into Prologue

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The views expressed herein are the personal views of the author and do not represent the official views of the Institute for National Strategic Studies, the National Defense University, or the Department of Defense.



Purpose

- **Trace history of strategic planning and national military strategy development in the U.S.**
- **Provide a foundation for a re-conceptualization of military strategy**
- **Offer insights to inform future strategy efforts**



Major Points

- **Sufficient authorities exist for broad national military strategic planning**
 - Exercised to varying degrees over 90 years
 - Goldwater-Nichols strengthened both SecDef powers and CJCS strategic planning authorities
- **U.S. national military planning in peacetime has taken on a different character than wartime strategic planning**
- **Changes in the security environment take years to grasp**
 - The transition of strategic planning processes from peace to imminent conflict or war takes several years
 - Strategic demands during global, general or dispersed war different than contingency operations
- **Cultural impediments to strategic planning develop during periods of peace—and persist into wartime**



Trends in U.S. Strategic Planning

	Interwar Era	World War II	Cold War	Post-Cold War to 9/11
Strategic Context and Environment				
International	Peace	Global War	Superpower Conflict	Peace
Domestic	Peace Dividend	Mobilized	Supportive	Drawdown
Threats and Challenges	Single States; Hypothetical	Axis Coalition	Soviet/Communist-bloc	Regional Rogues
Ends				
U.S. Interests and Responsibilities	Unilateral	Coalition-centric	Western Alliance-based	U.S.-centric
Ways and Means				
U.S. Armed Forces	Fiscally-Constrained	Manpower-Constrained	Generally Fiscally-Informed	Fiscally-Constrained
Mobilization	Considered but Not Planned	Required	Integral	Incremental Force Changes—No Mobilization
Allies and Partners	Not Considered	Mitigate Shortfalls	Access for Approach	Adjunct Role
Pol-mil Interaction	None	Pervasive	Significant	Limited
Character of Strategic Planning	Contingency Interventions—Not Strategy	Atlantic-Pacific Strategic Framework for Campaigns—ad hoc	Global Strategic Framework for Conflict—Formal	Short-duration Operations—Not Strategy



Strategic Context Influences Perspective and Character of Planning

Peace

- Contingency-focused
- Unilateral plans against discrete, single adversaries
- Narrow, circumscribed view of U.S. interests
- Constrained planning foundation: Ends-*means-ways*
- Short duration with no mobilization or reprioritization required
- Essentially military in character—operational, not strategic

War or impending conflict

- Strategic framework and alternatives
- Coalition centric: adversaries and common effort
- Broader view of U.S. interests and responsibilities
- Fiscally-informed and goal-driven: Ends-*ways-means*
- Resource mobilization integral—U.S. reserves, industries, coalition
- Extensive Pol-mil interaction and Executive guidance

United States strategic planning has taken on a different character depending upon whether the country is at peace or war.



The Foundation: 1903-1921

- **1903 War Department General Staff formed; despite statutory responsibility opposition persisted**
- **1916 first planning for major war—U.S. entry into war against Germany—halted by President Wilson**
 - War College Division continues general studies before U.S. entry
 - Insufficient to inform policy in April and May 1917
- **1917-18 Mobilize & deploy Expeditionary Force significantly larger than considered possible**
- **1919-21 To prevent reoccurrence of strategic uncertainty, Chiefs of Staff urge peacetime planning**
 - Institutionalize and strengthen War Plans Division
 - Resurrect the Joint Army and Navy Board

Tradition of formal military strategy development in the U.S. by military staffs dates to World War I era.



The New Era: Post-WWI Peace

- **After the “war to end all wars”—no geo-strategic threat**
 - Administrations do not want security costs or obligations
 - Era of “Dollar Diplomacy”
- **Civilian leaders pursued peace dividend**
 - U.S. peace treaties with Germany, Austria, & Hungary
 - Washington Naval Conference, 1921-2
 - Naval limitations and ratios
 - U.S. Navy unilaterally to scrap 2M tons, declare 10 year building “holiday”
 - Peaceful resolution of disputes
 - No fortifications in Pacific (followed by Philippine Independence Act in 1934)
 - Kellogg-Briand Pact outlawing war, 1928
- **Great Depression**

**Consequences of the peace dividend: 1920 National Defense Act authorized 280,000 man Regular Army;
1921 Congressional appropriations for 150,000;
by 1935, Army strength 118,750.**



Interwar Joint Planning

Joint Army and Navy Board

- **Composition:**

- Army Chief of Staff, Deputy Chief of Staff/Chief of G-3, and Chief War Plans Division
- Chief of Naval Operations, the Assistant Chief, Director of the Navy's War Planning Division
- Later, Service air chiefs added

- **Process:**

- Matters of co-ordinated policy and planning
- Consultative body; advisory to the Commander in Chief
- Joint Planning Committee—active adjunct committee

- ***Superseded by JCS in 1942***

As a result of Great War experiences, a single-theater concept dominated thinking of military leaders.



The Interwar Planning Culture

“...the lean years, dating back to 1921” GEN George C. Marshall June 1940

- Fiscally-constrained approach to strategy—ends-*means-ways*
- Only 1.1 percent of military budget to R&D in 1939--\$5,000,000
- Budgets derived from what Army leaders thought might get approved
- Culture of repression developed by 1930s—hesitancy by Army leaders to make budget case vigorously (persisted after naval rebuilding resumed)

National policy and peacetime optimism provided a narrow basis and small scope for military planning

- Influenced by popular belief that U.S. should not enter into military alliances or maintain forces capable of offensive operations

Peacetime planning took two forms:

- Small scale interventions in the Western Hemisphere
- “Color Plans”—based on hypothetical forces against single adversary; plans had no direct link to force mobilization or development; no joint resolution

“...more a question of what we might be permitted to do rather than purely a question of what should be done on the basis of national defense.” GCM



Environment in Transition: 1931-1937

1931—Japan seizes Manchuria, establishes *Manchukuo*

1933

- Hitler assumes power; withdraws from League
- Japan withdraws from League & Washington Treaties

1934—*Congress passes Philippine Independence Act*

1935—Germany announces rearmament

1936—*Congress passes Neutrality Act*

- Italy invades Ethiopia; Germany remilitarizes Rhineland; Rome-Berlin Axis formed
- Spanish Civil War breaks out
- Japan joins Germany in Anti-Comintern Pact against Russia

1937—*Congress revises Neutrality Act; refuses to fortify Guam*

- Japanese invade China; *Panay* Incident, German-Italian alliance

Strategic environment changes sweep away foundation of peace. Due to Great Depression, inertia, and ingrained culture, military planning in the U.S. was slow to react to new security environment.



Planning in Transition: 1938-1940

1938

- War Plan Orange revised
- Planners scope includes reassertion of German imperial aims

1939—Proposal for Rainbow Plans approved—coalition warfare

- **Rainbow No. 1** U.S. defense of W. Hemisphere & Monroe Doctrine
- **Rainbow No. 2** U.S., Britain, and France acting in concert; U.S. major effort in the Pacific
- **Rainbow No. 3** Protect U.S. vital interests in W. Pacific
- **Rainbow No. 4** Project U.S. forces into South America
- **Rainbow No. 5** U.S. in concert with Britain and France project force to E. Atlantic and African and/or European continents
- **CSA, CNO, and planners under Executive Office of the President**

1940 Army favors No. 4; FDR overrules—fleet to Hawaii, aid to Britain

**Strategic planning had to adapt and acknowledge two realities:
problems of dispersed war and informal alliances.**



The Victory Plan of 1941

Two basic strategic principles:

- Defeat Germany first
- Do the maximum with all possible speed—maximum emphasis on mastering logistic difficulties to make plans feasible rather than adapting plans to current logistic conceptions or capabilities

Process: *ends-ways-means* to determine force requirements

- Army planners limited by what Marshall labeled a culture of “repression”
- Three approaches to determining requirements:
 - Army—at best incremental changes within what permitted before
 - Industry—always able to deliver what Army asked for
 - Executive Office of the President—“New Dealers” in the Office of Industrial Mobilization

Outside influence and ideas needed to overcome ingrained staff views

Result: Unconstrained determination of means required for next several years—shortfalls, risks, mitigated by strategic approach, speed, and Allied contributions

Victory Plan called for an Army of 8.6 million—on V-E Day Army strength was 8.3 Million out of 12+ million Americans in uniform.



JCS Role in Post-War Planning

Late 1943—FDR approved role for JCS to continue to jointly address military problems in the post-war

- The JCS “should be represented in important groups concerned with post-war planning, as may be necessary to insure (sic) **military** considerations may be **integrated** with **political** and **economic** considerations.”
- “**Post-war military problems** should be studied as an **integrated** whole rather than as separate problems for the ground, naval and air forces.”
- “They must be examined from the points of view of **national defense**, of prospective **international military commitments** and related **national commercial interests**. While in the last analysis national security must dominate, we must be prepared to make **concessions to the international organization**.”

In early August 1945, the JCS and the joint planning structure began developing military policy and strategy for the post-war world. JCS planning authority based on FDR’s approval rather than statute.



JCS and Post-War Policy and Plans

In August 1945, Joint Staff Planners began development of:

- A post-war **military policy**
- An overall post-war **strategic plan** on a **worldwide** basis
- Recommendations on U.S. requirements for post-war **military bases**

In September 1945, JCS proposed military policies that in the aggregate were intended to maintain world peace under conditions satisfactory to the U.S.:

- Maintenance of the integrity and **security** of the U.S., possessions, territories, leased areas
- Advancement of U.S. **political, economic** and **social well-being**
- Maintenance of the territorial integrity and **sovereignty** or political independence of other **American states**, and regional collaboration to maintain international peace and security in the Western Hemisphere
- Maintenance of the territorial integrity, **security**, and when granted, the political **independence** of the **Philippine Islands**
- Participation in and **full support** of the **United Nations**
- **Enforcement**, in collaboration with allies, of **terms** imposed upon defeated enemy states
- Maintenance of the **best possible relative position** with respect to the **potential enemy powers**, ready when necessary to take military action abroad to maintain the security and integrity of the U.S.



JCS Required Post-War Elements

1. Strong, trained **mobile striking forces** with full logistic support
2. Adequate **forces to enforce terms** imposed upon the defeated enemy states
3. Forces to **protect areas vital** to the U.S. **against possible enemy attacks**, including attacks with newly developed weapons
4. An adequate **reserve** capable of **rapid mobilization**
5. Adequate, readily **expandable logistic system** in the U.S. to support operating forces
6. Intelligence system to provide adequate **information** on all **potential enemies** and the necessary hostile intent and capability
7. Promotion of **research, development** and provision of new weapons, processes, material, and countermeasures to deny these to potential enemies
8. Provision for **rapid emergency mobilization** of U.S. manpower, resources, and industry by supporting such measures as Universal Military Training, a large U.S. Merchant Marine, large U.S. commercial air and transport systems, industries essential to the national war effort, and stockpiling of critical materials
9. **Coordination** and understanding **among all Government agencies** and **industries** essential to the national war effort
10. **Liaison** with and **development** and **training** of the **armed forces** of the American nations of the Western Hemisphere, the Philippines, and **other nations** contributing to U.S. and hemispheric defense

Submitted to State Department for comment and revision.



JCS Post-War Planning: 1946

April 1946:

- **JCS submitted a “Strategic Estimate” to President Truman**
- **Considered 1st Joint Basic Outline War Plan, PINCER**
 - **Basis for Joint Basic War Plan, supporting Army and Navy Basic War Plans, and necessary supporting and contributory plans to govern joint action by U.S. military forces against the USSR in the next three years**
 - **Approved as the basis for further planning in June 1946— resulted in a series of strategic studies over the next year on Soviet threats and capabilities and on U.S. and Allied courses of action and means available**
 - **Complemented by proposed Unified Command Plan**

The initial strategic planning for war against USSR was accompanied by joint logistic and munitions estimates and mobilization planning.



National Security Act of 1947

- **1947—Congress conferred legal status on the JCS**
 - “the continuation of the Joint Chiefs of Staff with duties substantially at present...functioning in accordance with procedures developed by wartime experience.”
- **CSA, CNO, CSAF, Chief of Staff to Commander-in-Chief (CJCS 1949)**
- **JCS duties:**
 - Prepare strategic plans and provide for the strategic direction of military forces
 - Prepare joint logistic plans and assign logistic responsibilities
 - Establish unified commands in strategic areas when in the interest of national security
 - Formulate policies for joint training
 - Formulate policies for coordinating military education
 - Review major material and personnel requirements of military forces, in accordance with strategic and logistic plans
 - Provide U.S. representation on the U.N. Military Staff Committee

1948: Basic roles and missions decisions at Key West & Newport.



Initial Joint Strategic Planning

- **SecDef Forrestal considered JCS development of joint strategic war plans of capital importance**
 - Intended to guide employment of U.S. forces in war
 - Provide basis for mobilization planning and preparation for Service budget requests.
- **Initial JCS and Joint Staff planning efforts:**
 - Midrange plan intended to influence Service budgets: War with USSR within next 3 years—preliminary mobilization, limited objectives, pre-1939 USSR borders
 - Short-range joint emergency plans—war within the next FY: based on existing capabilities in budget—air offensive from U.S. and overseas bases followed by future ground offensive with specified allies, duration of 2 years
 - Long-range plan (8 yr) draft—out of date before approval
 - Preliminary efforts at munitions and mobilization planning

Shorter range plans evoked less inter-service rivalry—also no consensus on reliance on atomic weapons from SecDef down.



Joint Program for Planning

- By 1952, JCS hoped to overcome several years of haphazard and ineffective planning efforts
- Institutionalized JCS strategic guidance in the *Joint Program for Planning*—a family of short-, mid, and long-range plans
 - *Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP)* to guide the disposition, employment and support of existing forces during the coming FY
 - *Joint Strategic Objectives Plan (JSOP)* to provide strategic concepts for a war beginning 3 years in the future and to provide Services with the basis for their draft budgets
 - *Joint Long-Range Strategic Estimate (JLRSE)* to serve as a tool for research and development, by forecasting technological changes, probable areas of conflict and the essential undertakings required; horizon was a period 5 to 10 years in the future

“...the number, type, purpose, scope and relationship of joint plans...can be determined and that the processing of the plans can be accomplished in an appropriate planning cycle. If this is done, it will tend to eliminate piecemeal and crisis planning and will provide the greater portion of the JCS guidance needed by the Services, the unified commands, and by other agencies which properly look to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for guidance.”



Joint Program for Planning

By 1957, Joint Program for Planning reflected the following modifications:

- ***JSOP* shifted to cover the 3 year period 4 years after approval (changed in 1960 to 5 years in the future)**
 - Remained the foundation document—first step in preparing DoD’s annual budget
 - Acknowledging the potential of both contingencies and general war, the ***JSOP*** contained three sections:
 - **1st section: dealt with peacetime contingencies or lesser conflicts short of general war**
 - **2nd section: considered the first phase of a general war**
 - **3rd section: outlined the additional forces and resources needed, to include U.S. and allied mobilization, during the first four years of a general war**
 - Plagued by problem of correlating military requirements with projected funding—solution in ***JSOP-62*** was Service force “tabs” of their req’ts
- ***JSCP* followed *JSOP* format in providing guidance for three different contingencies or strategic scenarios**
- ***JLRSE* forecast for a 4 year period beginning 8 years in the future**



The Joint Strategic Planning Document

During reforms during the Carter administration, the JCS replaced the JSOP with the Joint Strategic Planning Document (JSPD)

JSPD was intended:

- **to recommend the national military strategy to attain national objectives**
- **to establish the force levels needed to achieve the objectives of the strategy and apprise civilian leaders of their attainability**
- **to recommend changes to Department of Defense planning and programming guidance**



The Joint Strategic Planning Document

Provided JCS advice on national defense objectives, policies, strategy, and force planning for period 3-10 years in the future

Included *National Military Strategy Document*

- Provided JCS advice on the military strategy and force capabilities required to attain U.S. national military objectives during a planning period 3-7 years in the future
- Intended to guide the development of defense program
- Fiscally-constrained military strategy per NSDD-219

Offered JCS recommendations for strategic planning priorities and inclusion of the military strategy in Defense Guidance



Contents: JSPD FY90-97 (August 1987)

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Overview and Purpose

Strategic Priorities

Alliances and Regional Cooperation

Peacetime Strategy

Crisis Response

Wartime Strategy



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Strategic and Fiscal Environment Changes

Mid 1980s, *glasnost*–era and increasing view that direct Superpower conflict unlikely—“*The End of History*”

- Assessment was that regional contingencies were most likely—and, if part of the Cold War at all, would be waged by surrogates
- View validated by Grenada and Lebanon; Soviet decline

1986—Goldwater-Nichols gave CJCS responsibility for:

- Strategic planning
- Contingency planning

Late 1980s—Era of increasingly constrained defense resources

- 1986: GEN Wickham revised short-range planning assumptions to reflect 2+ weeks warning
- 1987: Joint staff planners had attempted to place greater emphasis on regional planning in NMSD 90-94 but without much success; instead used the JSCP to emphasize regional contingencies
- 1988: Transition team favors multiple scenarios for regional conflict rather than the existing single global scenario—J-5 tasked to develop scenarios
- 1989: Accelerated decline in Defense funding

Goldwater-Nichols Act changes occur amid shift from Superpower conflict and are accompanied by tighter fiscal constraints.



Title 10 Statutory Responsibilities

Secretary of Defense

- **10 USC 118 “...conduct a comprehensive examination ... of the national defense strategy, force structure force modernization plans, infrastructure, budget plan, and other elements of the defense program and policies of the United States ... in consultation with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff”**
- **10 USC 113 “...with the approval of the President and after consultation with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, shall provide the Chairman with written policy guidance for the preparation and review of contingency plans.”**

CJCS—10 USC 153

- **“Assisting the President and the Secretary of Defense in providing for the strategic direction of the armed forces.”**
- **STRATEGIC PLANNING**
- **CONTINGENCY PLANNING**
- **ADVICE ON REQUIREMENTS, PROGRAM AND BUDGET**
- **NATIONAL MILITARY STRATEGY**



Return of an Interwar Planning Culture

- **As new CJCS, GEN Powell did not think ADM Crowe’s JSPD went far enough to account for changing strategic environment and fiscal constraints**
 - Tapped into emerging J-5 regional focus and concern
 - Powell’s subsequent changes considered the first major change in national military strategy in over 40 years
- **Increasing fiscal constraints on the force**
 - CJCS stressed that program requirements had to take into account “real” available resources and political context
- **Powell’s 1992 National Military Strategy intended as unclassified “Parade magazine”—split from resource and programming advice**
- **Base Force—conceived as minimum force upon which a larger force could be reconstituted if the need arose**
 - Analysis based on contingencies—MRC-E and MRC-W

**Begins shift from a Cold War global strategic framework to discrete contingency operations as the basis for force sizing:
Global war—to 2 MTW—to 2 MRC construct—to 10-30-30**



National Military Strategy: 1992-1997

- **CJCS Memorandum of Policy 7; CJCSI 3100.1**
- **Near and mid-term documents—separate NMS and JPG**
 - Unclassified National Military Strategy
 - Classified Joint Planning Guidance
- **Key NMS elements**
 - Strategic Landscape
 - National Interests and Objectives
 - Foundations and Strategic Principles
 - Planning and Employment
 - Force Levels
- **JPD provides resource and programming advice for Defense Planning Guidance**
 - JPD Volumes: Intelligence; Nuclear; C4; Future Capabilities; Mapping, Charting, and Geodesy; Manpower and Personnel; Logistics



Concluding Thoughts

- **Joint Strategic Planning System (JSPS) that GENs Powell and Shalikashvili implemented has been allowed to atrophy**
 - Post-9/11 focus on operations
 - Little understanding of JSPS and relationships
 - Joint Defense Capabilities Study and resistance to “strategies”
- **JPG discarded—undermined formal link from strategy to program**
- **NMS 2004 signed by CJCS but not released for 10 months—lacks authority and the basis for strategic prioritization—mute on issues such as Iraq, insurgency, or mobilization**
- **JSCP focused on discrete contingencies without strategic framework for dealing with issues such as: collaboration or opportunism of convenience; employment of non-state surrogates; global insurgency; strategic impact of WMD**
- **Persistence of characteristics of peacetime planning culture—dangerous in an increasingly global, flat world—pursue incremental and unilateral fixes not more fundamental shifts or cooperative approaches**



Questions



The Interwar Period: Authorities

1916 Chief of Staff and War Department General Staff “prepare plans for the national defense”

1921-42

Secretary of War “directly represents the President...; his acts are the President’s acts, and his directions and orders are the President’s directions and orders.”

Chief of Staff of the Army “is the immediate advisor of the Secretary of War on all matters relating to the Military Establishment and is charged by the Secretary of War with the planning, development and execution of the military program. He shall cause the War Department General Staff to prepare the necessary plans for recruiting, mobilizing, organizing, supplying, equipping and training the Army of the United States for use in the national defense and for demobilization. As the agent, and in the name of the Secretary of War, he issues such orders as will insure that the plans of the War Department are harmoniously executed by all branches and agencies of the Military Establishment, and the Army program is carried out speedily and efficiently.”



DoD Functions

Functions defined in Federal Regulation:

- **Support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic.**
- **Ensure, by timely and effective military action, the security of the United States, its possessions, and areas vital to its interest.**
- **Uphold and advance the national policies and interests of the United States.**

Code of Federal Regulations, Title 32, Section 368.3



Functions of Major DoD Components

Department of Defense 32 CFR 368.3

- Support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic.
- Ensure, by timely and effective military action, the security of the United States, its possessions, and areas vital to its interest.
- Uphold and advance the national policies and interests of the United States.

Defense Agencies & Field Activities

Functions are defined in DoD Directives for each Agency/Field Activity.

32 CFR 368.7; Listed in Enclosure 1 of DODD 5100.1

Services

- Recruiting
- Organizing
- Supplying
- Equipping (includes R&D)
- Training
- Servicing
- Mobilizing
- Demobilizing
- Administering
- Maintaining
- Construction, outfitting, repair equipment
- Construction, maintenance, repair of structures

32 CFR 368.6

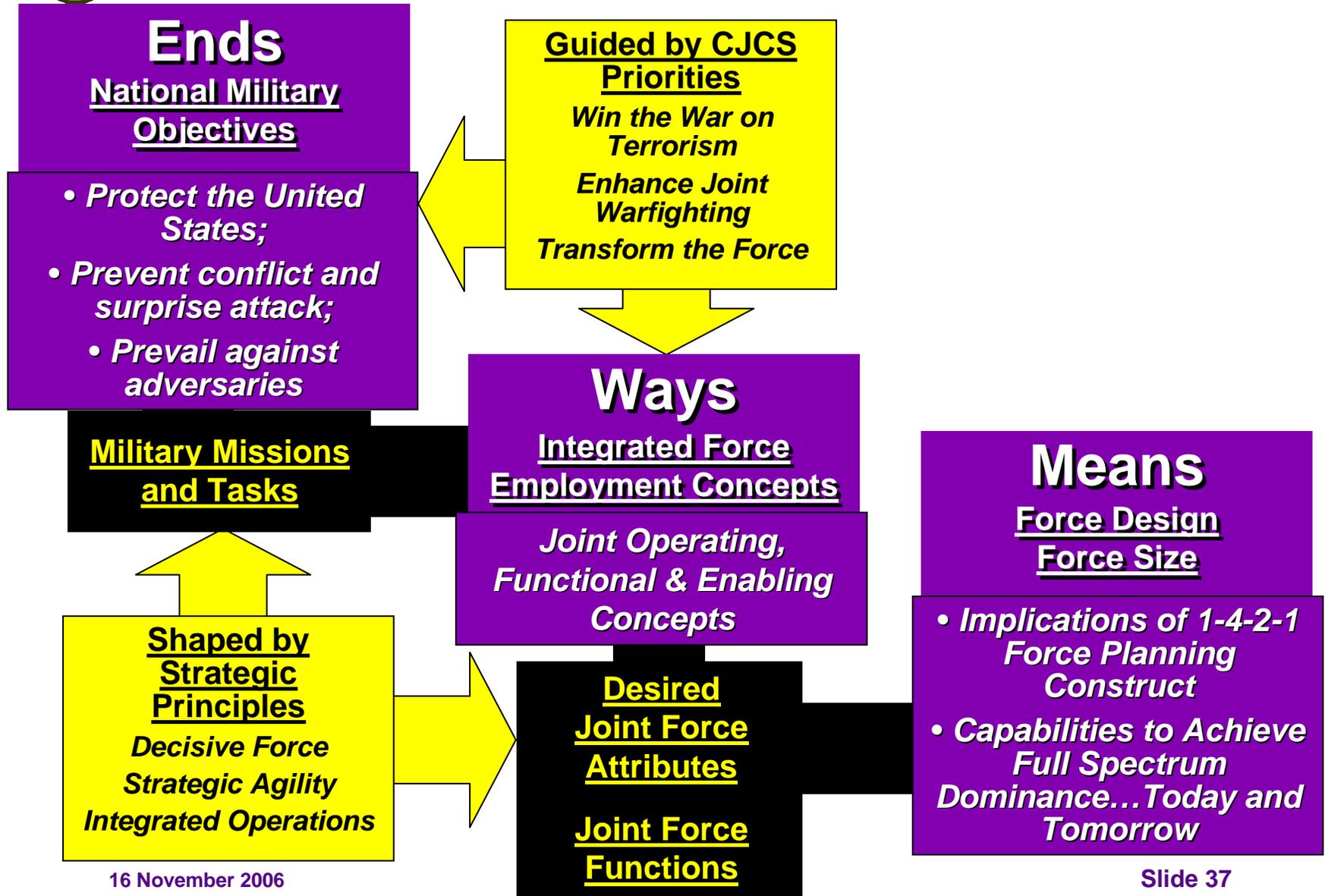
Combatant Commands

- Deterring Attacks
- Carry out assigned missions/tasks
- Assign tasks to subordinate commands for unified action
- Plan/execute military ops to support NMS
- Force protection/security for command
- Certify readiness of JTFHQ or functional HQ staffs
- Provide trained and ready joint forces to other combatant commands

UCP 2004 and 32 CFR 368.5



2004 National Military Strategy





2004 National Military Strategy: National Military Objectives

- **Protect the United States – Active defense-in-depth.**
 - Counter threats close to their source.
 - Protecting strategic approaches.
 - Defensive actions at home.
 - Support to civil authorities and consequence management.
 - Creating a global anti-terrorism environment.
- **Prevent Conflict and Surprise Attack.**
 - Forward posture and presence.
 - Promote security.
 - Deterring aggression.
 - Prevent surprise attacks.
 - Eliminate safe havens.
 - Preempt in self-defense.
- **Prevail Against Adversaries.**
 - Battlespace preparation.
 - Swiftly defeat adversaries in overlapping campaigns.
 - Win decisively to achieve enduring results.
 - Conduct post-conflict, stability and reconstruction operations.



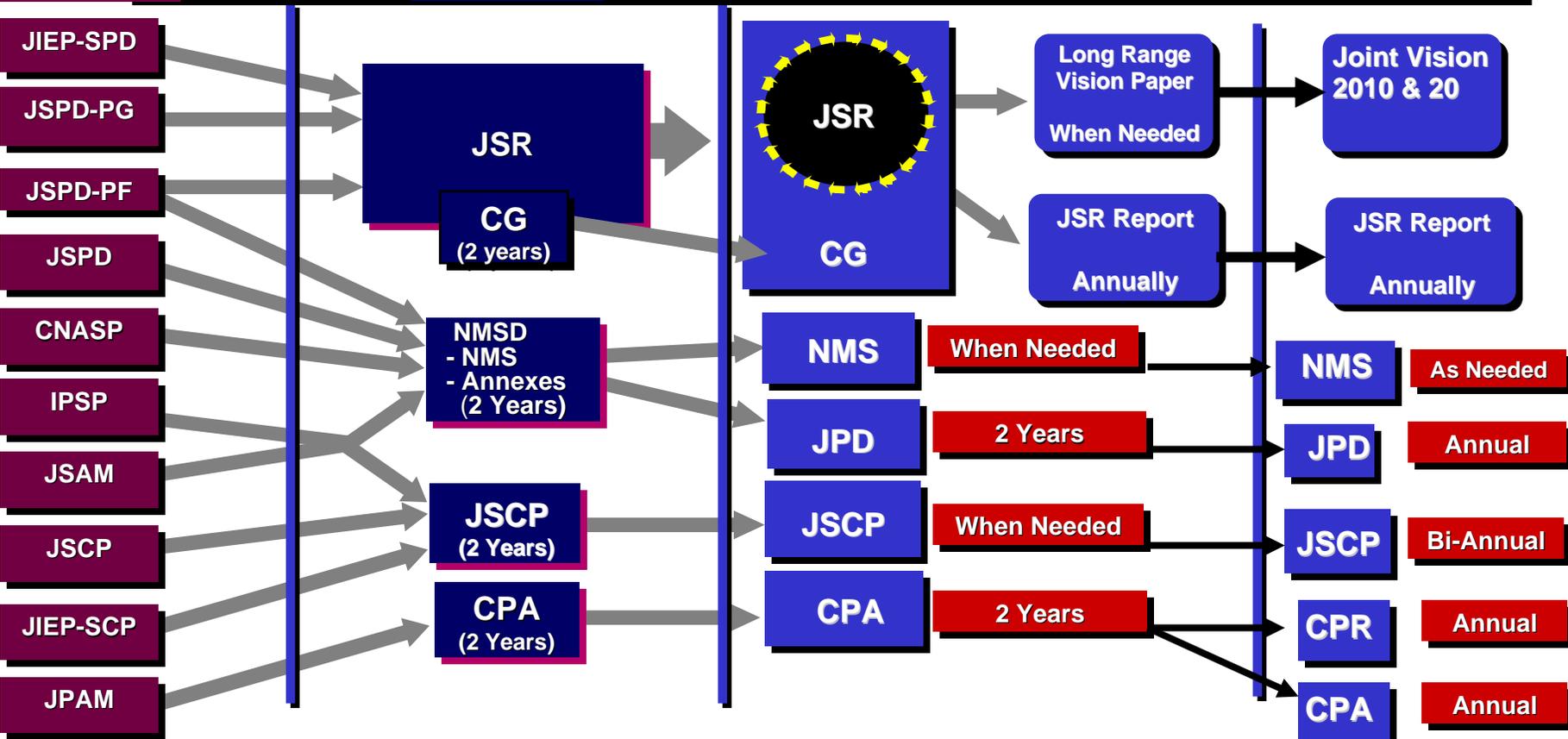
Evolution of JSPS

Pre - 1989
Cold War

1990 - 1992

1993

1997 & 99



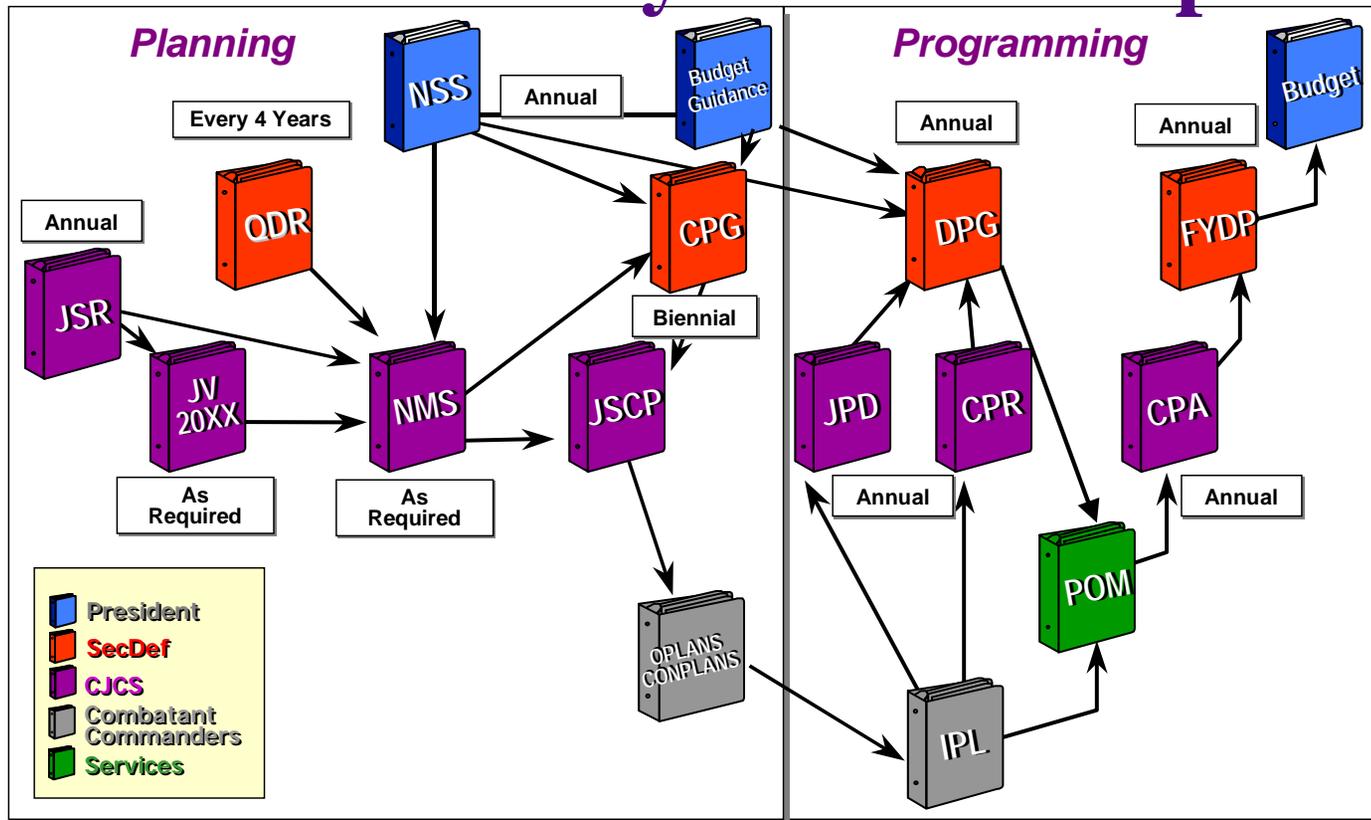
JSR = Joint Strategy Review
CG = Chairman's Guidance
NMS = National Military Strategy

JPD = Joint Planning Document
JSCP = Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan
CPA = Chairman's Program Assessment

CPR = Chairman's Program Review



1999 JSPS Key Relationships



Independent Joint Staff process built around:

- Periodic—4-Year cycle
- Discrete OSD inputs
- Emphasis on formal CJCS advice and reports



Major Components of Strategic Planning

