

Worth Noting

DoD Commission to Assess Interagency National Security Knowledge and Skills

On January 7, 2011, the Ike Skelton National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011 became public law. The Act contained a provision requiring the Secretary of Defense to commission an appropriate, independent non-profit organization to conduct a study to assess the current state of interagency national security knowledge and skills of DoD civilians and uniformed personnel and make recommendations for strengthening such knowledge and skills.

At a minimum, the study will include assessments and recommendations on:

- Interagency national security training, education, and rotational assignment opportunities available to civilians and military personnel.
- Integration of interagency national security education into the professional military education system.
- Levels of interagency national security knowledge and skills possessed by personnel currently serving in civilian executive and general or flag officer position, as represented by the interagency education, training, and professional experiences they have undertaken.
- Incentives that enable and encourage military and civilian personnel to undertake interagency assignment, education, and training opportunities, as well as disincentives and obstacles that discourage undertaking such opportunities.
- Any plans or current efforts to improve the interagency national security knowledge and skills of civilian and military personnel.

For the purpose of this study, the term “interagency national security knowledge and skills” means an understanding of, and the ability to efficiently and expeditiously work within the structures, mechanisms, and processes by which the departments, agencies, and elements of the federal government that have national security missions coordinate and integrate their policies, capabilities, budgets, expertise, and activities to accomplish such missions.

The findings and recommendations of this study and assessment are to be reported to both congressional defense committees not later than December 1, 2011. **IAJ**

Reading List for Diplomats and Foreign Affairs Professionals

The Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs and the President of the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) have co-sponsored the creation of a Foreign Affairs Professionals reading list. The list is intended to serve as a career-long, self-directed professional development resource for Foreign Service and Civil Service employees of the foreign affairs agencies. The list was compiled in collaboration with AFSA; the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training; the State Department’s Ralph J. Bunche Library, Office of the Historian, and Office of E-Diplomacy; and regional and functional bureaus.

From this extensive listing, a small core group was designated as “Highly Recommended” books that are must-reads for any well-rounded foreign affairs professional. These are reprinted below:

- *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice* – G.R. Berridge (4th Edition).
- *Arts of Power: Statecraft and Diplomacy* – Chas. W. Freeman, Jr.
- *Statecraft: And How to Restore America’s Standing in the World* – Dennis Ross.
- *Colossus: The Price of America’s Empire* – Niall Ferguson.
- *The Opportunity: America’s Moment to Alter History’s Course* – Richard Haass.
- *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World* – Walter Russell Mead.
- *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* – Joseph Nye.
- *Dangerous Nation* – Robert Kagan.
- *The American Ascendancy: How the United States Gained & Wielded Global Dominance* – Michael H. Hunt.
- *Islam: A short History* – Karen Armstrong.
- *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century* – Thomas L. Friedman.
- *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for our Time* – Jeffrey Sachs.
- *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* – Paul Kennedy.
- *The Cold War: A History* – John Louis Gaddis.
- *The Mission: Waging War and Keeping Peace with America’s Military* – Dana Priest.
- *Diplomacy* – Henry Kissinger. **IAJ**

What the QDDR Says About Interagency Coordination

by Ted Strickler

“Leading Through Civilian Power: The First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review” (QDDR) released on December 15, 2010, is described by the State Department’s website as “a sweeping assessment of how the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) can become more efficient, accountable, and effective in a world where rising powers, growing instability, and technological transformation create new threats, but also new opportunities.” A common thread running throughout the 242 page document is the awareness of the critical need for greater, more effective interagency coordination and collaboration in order to deal with those challenges. The highlights of the most relevant comments in the QDDR dealing with interagency coordination issues are extracted and summarized below.

Introduction and Executive Summary

Secretary Clinton’s introduction to the QDDR sets the importance of interagency coordination center stage when she states that “...we will work to break down walls between agencies. We will