

If each Department's Director of Laboratories is fully accepted as a member of the top-level management team, the mission-discipline interaction should be substantially improved, and the laboratories' personnel should couple more effectively with—

- (1) the military users (requirements);
- (2) special program offices and major contractors that handle the management of critical weapon-system developments;
- (3) nonprofit organizations, of which some provide special studies for the higher echelons and others are responsible for roles in systems engineering and technical direction;
- (4) the technical community at large which provides advanced technology for future weapon systems; and
- (5) organizations responsible for testing and evaluating existing military systems to determine how they perform and what improvements can be made.

The Task Force concluded that the frequent meetings now being conducted by the DDR&E with the Directors of Laboratories should be continued indefinitely. The resultant dialogue creates the mutual understanding that is required to improve the laboratories' responsiveness to important present and future military requirements.

7. MILITARY VERSUS CIVILIAN MANAGEMENT

Below the level of Director of Laboratories are the laboratory managers who have line responsibility for their organizations' activities. In previous examinations of the in-house laboratories, the problem of military versus civilian leadership has been considered critical.

It is generally conceded that competent management of a military in-house laboratory requires a sound knowledge of the military problems encountered in actual field and combat situations. This has been the leading argument for maintaining military management control of the Defense laboratories.

Nevertheless, in a carefully planned program, it is not out of the question to have civilian personnel who are thoroughly versed in military affairs from a quite practical viewpoint. It is as possible for civilians to understand the military environment as it is for military personnel to be trained in technical areas.