



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

SEP 17 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
ASSISTANT SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DIRECTOR, OPERATIONAL TEST AND EVALUATION
INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
ASSISTANTS TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
DIRECTOR, ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT
DIRECTOR, PROGRAM ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION
DIRECTOR, NET ASSESSMENT
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES
DIRECTORS OF THE DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: 60th Anniversary of the National Security Act of 1947

The National Security Act of 1947 realigned and reorganized the United States' Armed Forces, foreign policy, and Intelligence Community apparatus to meet new challenges emerging in the post-World War II era. The Act's first major step was realized on 17 September 1947 when the first Secretary of Defense, James V. Forrestal, was sworn into office. On this sixtieth anniversary it is fitting that we recognize our vital military establishment and the men and women of the Department, military and civilian, who have served us so well and are so deserving of the respect and gratitude of the Nation.

The new military structure prescribed in the Act included under the Secretary of Defense the three military departments – Army, Navy, and Air Force – as well as the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other elements. These changes in military organization were intended to strengthen U.S. defense capabilities by unifying the Armed Services through more centralized direction, stronger cohesion, and greater joint effort and mutual support. These themes have remained constant as the Department has pursued increasing effectiveness in joint operations and greater efficiency in its business and support activities.

Over the years much of this has been achieved. Today the Department of Defense is the largest U.S. governmental institution and the ultimate protector of the Nation's survival. Our experience has demonstrated that both able people and sound organizational structure are essential to an institution's effective functioning. In answering the Nation's call to duty, whether at home in response to natural disasters or abroad in the defense of freedom, the Department of Defense has always been a "can do"



institution that has risen to the many and varied challenges of its complex and indispensable mission.

As we reflect on the past sixty years, let us resolve to honor the memory of those who came before us by recommitting ourselves to ever greater levels of military effectiveness and efficiency for this Department in service to the Nation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert M. Gates". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a long, sweeping tail.