

of forms and instructions each year which, if laid end to end, would stretch 28 times around the earth.

The IRS, the Internal Revenue Service, employs 114,000 people. That is twice as many as the CIA and five times more than the FBI.

Unfortunately, I could go on and on with equally horrifying facts. The American tax system is simply out of control. Our families and businesses are facing a burden that is far too high and this Congress must do something to help them.

Last year we provided the first tax relief in 16 years, and that is a good start, but, Mr. Speaker, it is not enough. The American tax burden is much more than the size of the check we write to the Internal Revenue Service each year. It is also the difficulty in cost of complying with a lengthy and complicated Tax Code.

The best thing that we can do to help families and businesses nationwide is to give them a simpler, fairer tax system. This will give families more time to spend together, it will give businesses more time to do their business, and it will allow everyone to keep more of their hard-earned dollars.

I know that a reduced tax burden is appealing to people in my district, the third district of eastern North Carolina. Somehow I imagine that people throughout this Nation think it is a pretty good idea also.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join those of us in this Congress, bipartisan, to reduce the tremendous burden American taxpayers currently face. Bills have been introduced to sunset the Tax Code and to replace it with a fairer and simpler tax system. It is critical that we pass this legislation and start the debate about how exactly to give the taxpayers the relief they deserve. Whether it be a flat tax or a national sales tax, or another modification of the tax system, the American people need this and deserve this.

This debate will separate those of us on both sides of the aisle who are serious about tax reform from those who simply talk about it. Talk is cheap. Actions speak louder than words. Mr. Speaker, we have an opportunity in this Congress, the 105th Congress, to bring relief to the American taxpayers and it is something we need to do.

I urge my colleagues to pass this legislation for the sake of the American people. Let us eliminate the Internal Revenue Code and replace it with a fairer and simpler tax system.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND MILITARY READINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. HUNTER. While the Speaker is there in the Speaker's chair, I want to thank the gentleman for what he has

done to help bring our military forces at least to the state of readiness they are at today. As a friend on the Committee on National Security, the gentleman has worked long and hard to see to it that we have sufficient airlift to move our forces around the world.

I am here, Mr. Speaker, to speak about national security. We are in this great Chamber, the Chamber where, according to Alexander Hamilton, the people rule, and our first constitutional duty to our people, to our country, is to defend them. And yet, Mr. Speaker, over the last several years, under the leadership, if we can call it that, of the Clinton Administration, we have been abandoning our first duty to the people of the United States in that our military forces are much smaller than they were 6 years ago, and they are not ready, Mr. Speaker, to fight and win two regional conflicts. And that is the standard that we set for our armed forces.

Now 5 years ago when we fought Desert Storm we had 18 army divisions. Today we only have 10. We had 24 fighter air wings. Today we only have 13. The Clinton Administration has cut our air power almost in half. And in those days we had 546 naval ships. Today we only have about 333 ships in the U.S. Navy, so they have cut the Navy by about 40 percent.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we in the Congress obviously produce the defense authorization bill, and if we do not produce a bill that is signed by the President this year, that puts enough money in spare parts, ammunition, fuel, training and other aspects of readiness, as well as in modernization, and that means buying new equipment to replace the old equipment, then we are doing a great disservice to every young man and young woman who goes down to a recruiter and signs up to be in the U.S. military.

We have been having hearings around the country. The other day my great colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. DUKE CUNNINGHAM), who has also a seat made in San Diego, and I and a number of other Members, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MCHALE), and of course the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. HERB BATEMAN), who is the chairman of the Subcommittee on Military Readiness, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SOLOMON ORTIZ), the gentleman from Guam (Mr. ROBERT UNDERWOOD), and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. JIM HANSEN) all participated in a readiness hearing. We had that hearing on the Constellation, the United States aircraft carrier stationed in San Diego.

The testimony that came back from not only the leadership in the Navy, the people that wear the stars on their shoulders, the admirals, but also the enlisted people, was very disturbing, and I want to give my colleagues some of that testimony today, Mr. Speaker.

First, let us hear from Archie Clemmins, Admiral Archie Clemmins, who is the Commander-in-Chief of the

United States Pacific Fleet. And he said this: After decades of requirement driven operations, we are now asset limited. In the past, decisions to commit forces were guided by requirements. Now we determine the level of peacetime commitment based upon forces available. Instead of meeting all requirements, we must prioritize missions and then assign increasingly scarce resources. This is becoming more difficult as U.S. leadership and interests dictate an increase rather than a decrease in forward deployed naval forces.

And he closed with these words in his statement: The net effect is that we are stretching our forces to the limit. He said further: In the past 4 years, we have reduced our personnel force size by over 22 percent while maintaining recruiting standards and keeping faith with the career force. Although we have been manning our deploying ships at adequate level, we are experiencing manning shortfalls that have grown into readiness concerns.

Now that means, Mr. Speaker, that these 333 ships in a Navy that used to be 546 ships are having to operate at an increased OPTEMPO. That means that they are on deployment more often than they were 5 or 10 or 15 years ago, even during the Cold War. And that means that a young sailor who goes off on a 6-month cruise, or a young marine who goes off on a long deployment to Bosnia, or in days past Somalia or Haiti, now comes home and before he can spend time with his family, he is told that he has to leave again on another deployment; or he has to go with his ship while it is being repaired, given an emergency overhaul at some other port, and he is home just in time, has just enough time basically to hug his family, kiss his wife good-bye and leave.

After a period of time, Mr. Speaker, the American personnel who are serving in the uniform say, that is it, I have had it and I am leaving the service. Even today, and this was testimony throughout our hearings, pilots, who are a very, very critical component of our military forces, are in declining number. It is tougher to retain them. They are leaving and going other places.

Now, there are a lot of reasons given for that. Some of the reasons, theoretically, are monetary reasons. They can fly for airlines. It is a little easier job than being deployed for 6 months at a time on an aircraft carrier. But morale is low. And morale is low partly because of that OPTEMPO, because we have this fleet with decreasing resources.

And this budget that President Clinton has given to us is \$100 billion less than the budget that Ronald Reagan gave to us in the mid-1980s, using real dollars. So it could be dollar driven, but it is also morale driven in the sense that these people are seeing that we do not have the spare parts that we need. And that means that when a petty officer, and this was testified to us, when

a petty officer goes to a shelf and reaches for a component now for a part, he cannot find that part. It is not there because we did not buy it for him.

So now he has to go to one of the airplanes that we have in the fleet that is stationed on deck and he has to take that part out of the airplane. That is called cannibalization. Eating your own. It is like a farmer who has two hay bailers and he robs parts off one hay bailer so he can make the other one work. The problem with that, of course, is that you get to the point of no return with the first airplane just like you get to the point of no return with the first hay bailer and it becomes just a parts machine. All it is good for now is taking parts off of it. And if we do try to restore it, now we have to spend the manpower getting the extra part that was robbed off it to make the other plane work and you have to spend a lot of time putting that part back into the plane that was robbed.

So we are taking readiness dollars in several ways. We are taking a lot of manpower dollars.

Now, let me go to a statement by General David A. Bramlett, commander of the United States Army Forces Command. He said: Today our biggest concern is resource. The bottom line is that for fiscal year 1998, FORCECOM has fewer dollars than last year in operation and maintenance funding, roughly a 9 percent decrease in constant dollars. In sum, it is and will continue to be increasingly difficult to balance the requirements of go-to-war readiness, infrastructure and quality of life at current and anticipated levels of funding.

What that means is they leave old barracks and old houses for our military families. A corporal and his wife and couple of kids may be asked to live in a home that he can be absolutely ashamed of because Uncle Sam does not have the dollars to fix that home or to give him a better one because of the fact he has had to take that money and use it for fuel or spare parts to keep part of our military operating.

□ 1730

Now, let me refer to another gentleman who testified. This is commander Terry Kraft, United States Navy, Commanding Officer Tactical Electronic Warfare, Squadron 131. Commander Kraft said, "Another example of one of the frustrations present in our current situation is part support. Available parts go first to deployed squadrons, as they should. The challenge lies in obtaining parts for the jets needed to train when not deployed. Cannibalization has become routine for my squadron."

Mr. Speaker, we live in a time when our economy is extremely robust. We have lots of money circulating in this economy, lots of government revenue. We are supposed not to have any deficit this year. And yet, we have a military that has to cannibalize some of its air-

planes so that the other airplanes can fly.

One other important area, Mr. Speaker, is ammunition. I asked the Marine Corps and the Army and the Navy to tell me if they had enough ammo, and if they did not, how short they were. The Marine Corps is \$193 million short of the basic ammunition supply that it needs under its definition of a two MRC. That means two-conflict scenario. Incidentally, a two MRC scenario presumes that we might have to fight Desert Storm again in the Middle East, and we might have to fight almost at the same time as a conflict in Korea.

Well, the United States Marine Corps, which is our 911 force, those are the guys that go in first and sometimes they take enormous casualties. They are \$193 million short of their basic ammo supply. We ought to be ashamed of that, Mr. Speaker. The Army is \$1.7 billion short of its basic ammunition supply. And the Navy is over \$300 million short of its basic ammunition supply.

So Mr. Speaker, we are diserving the American people. And the American people may not think a lot about national defense right now, now that the crises with Saddam Hussein seems to be momentarily past us. But there is going to be a time when we have another conflict, another war, and the American people are going to turn to us and say, "Why did you follow the Clinton administration when it slashed national defense?"

Mr. Speaker, I hope that in this cycle, in this funding cycle, we restore the massive cuts that have been made in our readiness so that we do not have to stand there before the American people after a lot of casualties have been taken on the Korean Peninsula or in the Middle East with no answers for the American people who are asking that question after their sons and daughters have gone off to fight a war that we did not have them prepared for.

So Mr. Speaker, I see over here I have my good friend, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES), who is an outstanding member of the Committee on National Security, along with you, Mr. Speaker; and I would like to yield to my colleague.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California very much for yielding.

I really wanted to make a brief statement. Then I have got a couple questions I would like to ask him. I first want to thank him for the leadership he, as well as the Speaker and other Members, provide on the Committee on National Security. It is because of his experience and his knowledge, he is a former veteran himself, that he is able to help those of us who are new on the committee understand the threat and importance of trying to rebuild our military, which I think has taken unbelievable cuts over the last several years. And before I ask the question, I

wanted to make the statement, because I know of also his interest in our retirees, those who have served this Nation both in wartime and peacetime.

I believe I read recently, and correct me if I am wrong, that the President has recommended approximately a \$300 million cut in veterans health care benefits and at the same time asking for a 38 percent increase in funding for the Arts and some of his other social programs. To me, that is a tragedy when we turn our back on those who have served our Nation again, whether it be peacetime or wartime.

My colleague touched on deployments earlier. Would the gentleman please verify for me and expand if he can. Is it true that since President Clinton has been our President that we have been on 25 deployments? And if that is true, could you approximate the cost of that and where those monies come from.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, yes. In fact, our good colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON), who is chairman of the Subcommittee on Research and Development, has developed these facts. In the last 5 years or so, we have deployed over 25 times. And that corresponds or can be compared to about 10 deployments, major deployments, in the previous 10 years.

So the ironic facts are that, while Ronald Reagan and George Bush stood up to the Soviet Union and brought down the Soviet Union with the policy of peace through strength, this President has cut defense almost in half and yet, with a series of operations, so-called peacekeeping operations, in Somalia and Haiti and Bosnia and other places, has stretched our forces to the limit. And the price tag that I have seen on the total of all these deployments is in excess of \$13 billion. That is the information that I have on it. And, yes, there have been 25 major deployments.

The other thing that the gentleman needs to know is this: We put together a defense budget that was based on what it would take for us to maintain our Armed Forces and we did not count the deployments. So it is like having a family put together their yearly budget and they say, okay, we are going to spend so much for our house mortgage, so much for our car payments, so much for gas, and we are going to eat at home, so, so much for groceries each month; and then they have a death in the family or sickness in the family and they have to travel halfway across the country and they have got to stay at grandma's, and they have got to help somebody out on a trip that takes 5 weeks or 2 months. They will notice that their family budget goes far beyond what they had programmed it for because they have an emergency or a contingency they did not plan for.

All of those 25 deployments that the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) talks about and that the

chairman of the Committee on Armed Services, Committee on National Security Committee, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPENCE), our great chairman, talks about, all of those deployments were taken out of our budget. We were not given any extra money to do that.

So what happened? We said, okay, the President says we are going to go to Bosnia. He says, "You go find the money," to the military leadership. So they go to the aircraft repair commands. "You guys cannot repair as many aircraft as you thought you were going to have to repair." And the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. FOWLER) brought this up today. We have over 100 aircraft awaiting repair. We have over 100 engines that are in repair that are backlogged on depot level maintenance.

So the President's military leadership goes and says stop repairing those planes. We need the money to pay for fuel and to pay for the other necessities to take our forces halfway around the world to Bosnia, and we are going to take it out of your repair budget.

Then they go to the Marines, perhaps; and they say, hold up. Do not buy that ammunition you were going to buy with the money that Congress gave you. We are going to use that money to fly you across the world to Somalia. You are going to run an operation there or to Bosnia. So what happens is, that money is taken out of our hide. It is taken out of the military forces accounts that they were going to use to modernize.

So we now have what is known as a supplemental coming up. That means, when you have an emergency, you try to pay for it. We cannot afford to take that out of the military's own hide right now, because they already have a shortage of spare parts. They have got a shortage of ammunition. They have got a shortage of personnel incentives to keep those pilots in the service.

If we rob them of this money to pay for this commitment in Bosnia that they did not ask for, but we placed on them, then we are disserving those people.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, let me tell the gentleman as chairman of the Subcommittee on Military Procurement, I say that respectfully for those who might be watching, the gentleman from Texas does such an outstanding job.

I have three bases in my district. I have Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, I have Camp Lejeune Marine Base in Jacksonville, North Carolina, and I have Cherry Point Marine Air Station in Havelock, North Carolina.

During the Christmas break, I had the occasion to meet with two pilots from Cherry Point off base, out of uniform. I was distressed with what they told me. These are young men in their early thirties, mid thirties and wanting to make a career out of the Marine Corps.

Again, they are telling me how they are being restricted as it relates to their flying time, to their combat practices. When you are making all these comments, I want the people that might be watching tonight, the American people, to know that we are talking about readiness.

We are telling our pilots, as you were saying, we do not have enough money for you to get up there and do what you need to do to be at a razor sharp edge so that you can defend this Nation. You can take care of yourself. You can take care of that plane.

I get a little frustrated, and I guess that is why I am kind of fumbling, to see, as the gentleman made mention in his comments, these fine young men and women that are dedicated to this Nation.

I am afraid that, too many times, all of us as American citizens take our military for granted. We do not think about what they need, what we need to do to have a strong military until they are called upon.

I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON) who is now on the floor. I am sure he wants to engage in some discussion in just a moment.

But I think that the gentleman from California talks about the deployment and what it has cost, and I want to ask him a question because of his experience and expertise being in the position he is in. We talk about China. We talk about Iran. We talk about Iraq. Can you tell me how, let us take China for an example, how they are building their military. Are they somewhat stagnated, or are they spending money to build a strong military?

Mr. HUNTER. I thank my good friend, the gentleman from North Carolina for the question. I want to say, also, that the gentleman from South Carolina is one of the finest members of our committee. We really appreciate him and all the hard work that he does on the subcommittee. He is always there and stays late. He is usually there with the other gentleman who is here right now, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON).

Mr. JONES. I must tell the gentleman, he said South Carolina. I know he meant North Carolina.

Mr. HUNTER. I meant North Carolina.

Mr. JONES. You have been in that campaign. I want you to come back.

Mr. HUNTER. I am from southern California, so I think everything is the south. But I thank my friend for correcting me.

With respect to China, China is trying to step into the superpower shoes that were left by the Soviet Union, and I think their intent toward the United States is best manifested by the fact that their most recent purchases from Russia have been antiship missile cruisers. Now, those are ships that were built by Russia with one goal in mind, and that is of destroying American aircraft carriers.

You may recall that we embarrassed China with respect to the Taiwan crisis. We moved the fleet in, and we backed them down. They were throwing missiles over the bow as the Taiwanese were trying to hold their elections. They were embarrassed by that, and I am sure their military vowed to never have it happen again.

So they have been going about the task of acquiring a lot of missile capability, some of it supersonic, some of it with the ability to zig and zag so that our antimissile shipboard defense systems will not be able to hit them. They are doing that for one reason. They want to be able to sink our ships and destroy the young men and women that operate those ships.

China is becoming very aggressive. They have made very aggressive statements about us. During the Taiwan crisis, one of the diplomats said we hope the people of America care more about Los Angeles than they do about Taiwan. That is a very naked threat to use nuclear weapons on an American city, something you would never get from the Soviet Union.

We thought the Soviet Union was bellicose and threatening, but the Chinese have been building a lot of military capability. They are buying a lot of high-tech capability from the Russians and from other countries that have technology, some of them western countries, unfortunately.

They have got about 42 supercomputers that they bootlegged out of the United States and that they got past an acquiescent Clinton administration review. The Clinton administration has not done a good job of keeping the supercomputers out of the hands of the people that are now using them, some of them in their military nuclear complex, building nuclear systems that are to be targeted at American cities.

But you mentioned one thing I want to bring back to your district in North Carolina. You mentioned sitting down with your pilots and talking with them and their concern about lack of spare parts. Let me give you the mirror of that discussion that you have had in informal discussions.

We had this hearing on the carrier, the USS *Constellation*, in San Diego last week. This is what one of our people said, Commander John Hults, Commanding Officer of the Strike Fighter Squadron 113. This is what Commander Hults said.

□ 1945

He said, "Very simply stated, my job is to get all of my pilots into the cockpit enough to make them proficient in all of our primary mission areas." That sounds logical. "In order to achieve that, the training and readiness matrix that we use to report our level of readiness requires that each Hornet pilot," that is an F-18, "fly 32.8 flight hours per month."

Here he says it. "The reality is that we don't have the necessary resources available to us to attain or maintain

that level of readiness." That means that those young pilots in Commander Hults's squadron, if they have to enter into a combat situation in the Middle East or in Korea in the near future, will not have the training that we said they needed to have to make them proficient. The reason they did not have the training is because this government in Washington, D.C., while they felt we had plenty of money to spend on the National Endowment for the Arts and a lot of other things that have at least what I would call marginal value added to this country, we did not see clear, our government, to give the resources to our pilots and to pilot training.

He goes on and he says this. "The number one resource challenge that we face is low aircraft availability. The primary reason is that we don't have enough spare parts in the F/A-18 community. This lack of spare parts is the cause of a snowball effect that can be felt throughout the squadron. The fewer parts we have, the more cannibalization we have to do."

He brings up that word again, robbing one airplane so that another one can fly, "The more cannibalization we have to do, the more maintenance man-hours required; the more man-hours required, the longer the workday, which affects morale and leads to retention problems."

So he has brought this back to why people are leaving these critical positions in the armed forces right now. Low morale.

One thing Ronald Reagan did when he came in in 1980 was put in enough increases in our military budget to put those spare parts on the shelf and to pay our people adequate pay, and to carry that flag high, to establish a policy in this country that we would achieve peace with our allies and our adversaries through American strength.

Commander Hults goes on. He says, "Our noncombat expenditure allowance, which is the ordnance we are given for training, doesn't allow us to practice with the weapons we will realistically use in combat. Among our modern-day weapons of choice for combat are the various laser-guided bombs that provide pinpoint delivery accuracy and, therefore, minimum collateral damage and minimum numbers of aircraft required to send into harm's way." We all remember that.

Americans who watched CNN and watched the war in the Gulf remember perhaps the world's luckiest taxicab driver; it was that taxicab that was going across the Iraqi bridge. The American airplane came in and instead of delivering as we did in the old days in World War II, in Vietnam and Korea literally a blanket of hundreds and hundreds of bombs, hoping that one of them or two of them would hit the bridge at a key point and knock it out, we delivered one bomb into that bridge and we set it right into a strategically placed strut on that bridge and just as

the taxicab driver got to the end of the bridge and got safely off of it, that bomb hit. One single bomb, that is the precision-guided munition that Commander Hults is talking about. But he says we need to train with those bombs.

Then he goes on to say this. He says, "Unfortunately, we don't get any of those in our noncombat expenditure allowance, and I currently have only one pilot in my squadron that has ever carried and delivered one." That means that if Commander Hults is in a combat situation over Iraq in the next several months and he says, "I have two bridges I have to knock out. Has anybody ever dropped one of these laser-guided bombs?" he will have one man who says, "I've used them before, Commander," but he will not have anybody else. So he will have to either take a chance that a brand-new rookie with that piece of equipment can learn enough to do the job, or he is going to have to send that same pilot that knocks out the first bridge, the only guy he has got in the squadron who is qualified, to do the second bridge.

It is just one of thousands of examples, but it is an example of how the policies that we set here and the inadequacy of military spending that we have established as a policy here have a harmful effect on two things, our ability to defeat the enemy in combat, and secondly, the disservice that we do to our young men and women who put on the uniform expecting to get the very best in equipment and training, who are shortchanged as a result of that.

I thank the gentleman for letting me give that lengthy explanation, and I yield to him for any other questions.

Mr. JONES. I just want to thank the gentleman for being on the floor tonight. I know the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON) is going to join him. I thank the gentleman for letting me be a small part of this tonight.

I want to thank the gentleman from California and the gentleman from New Jersey because they are the leaders in the Republican Party; in the House, they are the people that many of us look to for guidance as it relates to helping our military remain the power that it needs to be to protect the freedoms of this country.

I must say to the gentleman from California and to the gentleman from New Jersey that what they are doing tonight is extremely helpful, because every civic club I speak to back in my district, I always close with comments about the needs of our military to protect the freedoms of this country. That is really what it comes down to.

I always close by telling the people that if you have not read the book by Caspar Weinberger called *The Next War*, you need to read it, because there is a lot of good information as to what is out there that threatens our security and our freedoms.

Again, I thank the gentleman for letting me be a small part of this.

Mr. HUNTER. I thank the gentleman. He has done a lot to help this committee.

I want to recognize the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON), an expert in lots of military areas who really has great expertise, especially in airlift.

Mr. SAXTON. I thank the gentleman for yielding. Before the gentleman from North Carolina leaves the floor, I just want to thank him for being here tonight and making the contribution that he did. I know how deeply and earnestly he feels about the issues that he was talking about relative to our national defense. We value the leadership of the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) on these issues. We were delighted he was able to be here with us tonight.

First, let me say how much I enjoy serving on the gentleman's subcommittee, the Procurement Subcommittee. There are darned few things that we have to be thankful for, that is, those of us who disagree with the Clinton administration on our level of military commitment in these days, but one of the things that we do have to be thankful for is that the gentleman is where he is. I watched, actually I helped, I was there by his side last year on the Procurement Subcommittee as we tried to sort out and make those difficult decisions about how to best allocate the very limited resources, relatively limited resources that we have to make use of relative to our national security. It always made me feel good at the end of the day that the gentleman was there holding the reins to make sure that we were guided correctly through that maze of decisions that we had to make.

Mr. HUNTER. If the gentleman will hold on for just a second, I appreciate his kind words. I just wanted to remind him and remind my colleagues that the reason I am the chairman of that Procurement Subcommittee is because one of my dearest friends in the world that I know, the gentleman thinks highly of him too, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPENCE), the chairman of the Committee on National Security, appointed me and appointed the other members who are chairmen of the subcommittees.

He basically gave us the ball in all of our respective areas. I have Military Procurement, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) has Research and Development, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BATEMAN) has Readiness, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY) has Military Construction and on down the line. The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER) has Personnel. He has let us run with the ball.

When we have had a fight with the Clinton administration, he has always stood behind us.

I accept the gentleman's thanks. It is a two-way street because the gentleman from New Jersey is a real hero in my book. But I want to let him

know, too, that it is our leader, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPENCE) who has really bucked this administration and bucked the numbers that we are forced to live with.

Mr. SAXTON. I could not agree more with regard to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPENCE), as well. One of the really productive things I believe about the style of leadership that the gentleman from South Carolina provides is that he recognizes that in each committee member there is a little bit different area of expertise, whether it happens to be shipbuilding, and I think of the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BATEMAN), or whether it happens to be munitions and I think of the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), or whether it happens to be some other area, there are many members of our committee, and I might say on both sides of the aisle, to which the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPENCE) is willing to hand the ball at any given time to carry it through his or her area of expertise. I think that is the mark of a real leader, to be able to dispense the job the way the gentleman from South Carolina has been able to.

I wanted to bring up a bit of history, and fairly recent history, actually when I heard the gentleman's opening statement at the beginning of this hour about how we had built down for the last number of years, I believe since 1985 actually was when the builddown in defense spending started. I think back to those days, I think of the speeches that Ronald Reagan gave about how we would make our country proud again and how we would make our country, the country's national security worthy of the respect of the American people again, and how in 1980 and 1981 he began that buildup.

But I also remember another person who served at the end of the decade of the 1980s and the beginning of the decade of the 1990s, the Secretary of Defense, our friend Dick Cheney, who at the time was Secretary Cheney. I remember one speech that he gave in particular which is most, I believe, noteworthy today in the context of where we find ourselves. That occurred over in the then-Armed Services Committee room.

I believe it was in September of 1990. Saddam had invaded Kuwait. Secretary Cheney came before the Armed Services Committee and he said words that were almost identical to this, one of those phrases or one of those few sentences that I will always remember. He said, "The Cold War is over, and I am here on the brink of our going to war with Iraq to explain to you why I think we need a smaller defense." He was very determined to make sure he got the right message across.

He continued, "But," he said, "I want to make sure everyone understands that unlike after every other conflict," he was saying every other conflict prior to the end of the Cold War, "unlike at the end of every other conflict, this time," he said, "we're going to do it smart."

Well, I wish he were still in that chair, because we probably would have done it smart. But I am afraid in the meantime perhaps we have not been so smart. Maybe the builddown has gone too fast.

I do not think he had in mind the speeches we have to give like the one we are giving tonight about cannibalization, OPTEMPO, lack of readiness, modernization problems that we have, making decisions about how we are going to best use the limited resources. That is not what Dick Cheney had in mind, I am sure.

Then after he fully discussed that with us, he said, "And remember something else, too." He said, "The Soviet threat has diminished. The Soviet Union is on the verge of breaking up." He said, "But remember this. The threat will not go away. It will only change." Words to remember.

Earlier I heard the gentleman discussing the situation relative to China. We know the situation relative to South Korea and North Korea. We know that we were on the brink of another conflict in the Middle East just a few weeks ago.

We have got, what is it, 25,000 troops ongoing in Bosnia, give or take a platoon or two? And so the threat has changed. As the gentleman knows, it is not just a conventional threat that we face today, it is new threats that perhaps existed in the past but are even more prevalent today than they were during the Cold War.

The acronym WMD is spoken in these halls quite frequently, particularly in our committee, weapons of mass destruction, WMD, and the technology that we are in the process of developing to deal with the problems involved in weapons of mass destruction. That is what this entire flap over Iraq was about, how to deal with this issue and all of these kinds of threats, I am afraid, are what Dick Cheney was talking about when he said, "And don't ever forget, the threat may change, but there will be a threat."

□ 2000

And so today, more than ever, I think it is important that Members of this House and Members of the other House and Members of the American public and people that work over in the Pentagon recognize the need to face today's threat, because it is different, but it has not gone away.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman has made a great and eloquent statement, as usual.

Let me ask the gentleman, who specializes, and incidentally, we really value the gentleman's membership on the Committee on National Security, and especially the work that he has done in terms of the task force on terrorism and the fact that the gentleman recognizes, perhaps more than any other Members, although Sonny Bono, our good buddy, was one of the people that recognized that we were entering this era of terrorists with high technology.

Let me ask the gentleman, though, about airlift capability. Where are we going with airlift, and what kind of job is the C-17 doing, for example, the newest addition to our airlift fleet, and how much more work do we have to do?

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, we have a ways to go. Our strategic airlift, that is the lift that we use to get to far places around the world, over the last several decades has been carried out in basically 3 fashions. We have the C-141s that started to come on line in 1962; we have C-5s, a great fleet of C-5s, although they are old too. They also came on line in the 1960s. We also have a fleet of aircraft which we in effect rent from the airlines which are called the craft fleet, and they are pressed into service in time of surge when we need to get someplace in a hurry. They are regular commercial aircraft, freight carriers that we use, for the most part, and also passenger carriers, but freight carriers for the most part that we use in conjunction with the C-141s and C-5s.

The C-141s are worn out and absolutely will be out of service, for the most part, with the exception of one wing, that I am aware of, that will be flying out of McGuire Air Force base up in New Jersey, and a few C-141s by aught 3 that will be used by the Reserves. Other than that, the C-141s are going away.

The C-17 buy that we have put in place to replace in effect the worn out C-141s are in the process of coming on line. We are ramping up so that we can produce and bring on line 15 a year. We are currently, I believe, at 10 a year, and we currently have a wing of them down in Charleston, another wing going out at McChord Air Force base on the West Coast, and so between now and aught 3, aught 4, aught 5, that buy will be completed.

In talking with the Air Force leadership just the other day, we have the need, they believe, for about 15 or 20 additional, in addition to the 120 that we have already committed to buy, and that request will be formally made in the 5-year plan as it begins to unfold.

The C-5 fleet is also worn out, and this is a big problem, because there is a debate currently going on in the Air Force. In fact, I am going out to Travis Air Force base in the next few weeks to look at the possibility, a proposal that the Air Force is making on modernization of the C-5 fleet. They need new hydraulics, new engines and new aeronautical devices to bring them up to speed so that they can fly in today's modern world. The problem with the C-5 is that today, because they are old and worn out, they have the ability to take off, on average, only 7 out of 8 times they try.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, I hope that that same average does not apply to landings.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I hope not, too. Obviously it does not, but for one reason or another, one time out of

every 8 they take off, they cannot take off, so this creates a very big problem if one flies from this country overseas and makes a few landings there, by the time you get back around the loop, if you have landed 6 or 7 or 8 times, and you figure you are not going to take off one of those times, which is very bad. So this modernization proposal that they have is a very good proposal. Actually, the airframe has 80 percent of its life left in it, but the hydraulics and engines and aeronautics all have to be replaced.

So, Mr. Speaker, that is essentially where we are. The craft fleet will remain very important, but basically, our military airlifters are either in need of replacement or very extensive modernization programs.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. Once again, I thank him for his great expertise on the Committee on National Security, and we have a bunch of great Members who have really contributed in these very difficult times. Our motto is that we are going to keep working and we are going to try to build that budget back up to where it should be so that we do a service rather than a disservice to the folks in uniform.

OMISSION FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

The following was omitted from the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of March 10, 1998 at page H-918 following the one-minute speech of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TRAFICANT).

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair reminds all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House, and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings is in violation of the rules of the House.

OMISSION FROM THE CONGRES- SIONAL RECORD OF TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 1998

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Mr. THOMAS, from the Committee on House Oversight, reported that that committee had examined and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 595. An act to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse lo-

cated at 475 Mulberry Street in Macon, Georgia, as the "William Augustus Bootle Federal Building and United States Court-house".

H.R. 3116. An act to address the Year 2000 computer problems with regard to financial institutions, to extend examination parity to the Director of the Office of Thrift Supervision and the National Credit Union Administration, and for other purposes.

OMISSION FROM THE CONGRES- SIONAL RECORD OF TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 1998

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The SPEAKER announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 347. An act to designate the Federal building located at 61 Forsyth Street SW., in Atlanta, Georgia, as the "Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center".

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. PASCARELL (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today until 2:00 p.m. on account of attending a funeral.

Mr. TANNER (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for after 5:00 p.m. today and Thursday, March 12th on account of serving as pallbearer at former law partner's funeral.

Mr. DEUTSCH (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for after 3:30 p.m. today and Thursday, March 12th on account of personal reasons.

Mr. MANTON (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for after 3:00 p.m. today on account of official business.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

The following Members (at the request of Mr. WATT of North Carolina) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois for 5 minutes.

Mr. FILNER for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY for 5 minutes.

Mr. KLINK for 5 minutes.

Ms. MALONEY of New York for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON for 5 minutes.

The following Members (at the request of Mr. SAXTON) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:

Mrs. MORELLA, today and March 12 for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, March 17 for 5 minutes.

Mr. SAXTON, today for 5 minutes.

Mr. WELDON of Florida, March 14 for 5 minutes.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks were granted to:

The following Members (at the request of Mr. WATT of North Carolina) and to include extraneous matter:

Mr. KIND.

Mr. MASCARA.

Mr. BLUMENAUER.

Mr. HAMILTON.

Mr. VENTO.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York.

Mr. CARDIN.

Ms. SANCHEZ.

Mr. SKELTON.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.

Ms. STABENOW.

Mr. FARR of California.

The following Members (at the request of Mr. SAXTON) and to include extraneous matter:

Mr. CALVERT.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.

Mrs. KELLY.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida.

Mrs. CHENOWETH.

Mr. RADANOVICH.

Mr. MICA.

Mr. COBLE.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG.

Mr. GEKAS.

Mr. SHIMKUS.

The following Members (at the request of Mr. HUNTER) and to include extraneous matter:

Mr. EVERETT.

Mr. BUNNING.

Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut.

Mr. SHERMAN.

Mr. COSTELLO.

Mr. PACKARD.

Mr. BRADY.

Mr. GINGRICH.

Mr. HAMILTON.

Mr. TORRES.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, March 12, 1998, at 10 a.m.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports and amended reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for official foreign travel during the third and fourth quarters of 1997 by various Committees of the U.S. House of Representatives, pursuant to Public Law 95-384, as well as a consolidated report of foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Speaker-authorized official travel in the first quarter of 1997 and the first quarter of 1998 are as follows: