

a Job'? Truer words were never spoken, in many ways, because it helps that person preserve dignity and self-respect and feel like they are a contributing member of society.

How many of our other social programs would turn around when people felt that they had that kind of dignity and empowerment to take charge of their own lives? What is going to happen to our society is we have less reliance on social programs, on failed social programs, I might add, because there will be jobs and we will be an opportunity society as we once were.

America was great because our grandparents and our grandparents' parents that came to this land because it was the land of opportunity where you could become anything you wanted be. I think we have lost that vision but we are regaining it in this 104th Congress. That is the ball we have got to keep our eye on. That once that budget is balanced, we will be having an opportunity society again for everybody.

Mr. HAYWORTH. As I heard my colleague from Arizona, I think of our colleague from Texas who perhaps more than anyone in this institution has lived the American dream, who knows what it is like to pull up from the bootstraps. I would ask the gentleman from Texas, coming through the experiences he has, knowing the ultimate fabric and value and truth of our society, what does he see as the mission for the future?

Mr. STOCKMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply touched by how after a year we still see the grassroots and I want to thank everybody who went out today. I have to tell you, I went out today and voted this morning at a little church near our home.

I did start out at night, looking up, in Fort Worth at the clock, it also had the temperature, it never dropped below 80 degrees in 1980, and I was sleeping on the concrete slab and had a lot of introspect and thought, a lot of different things.

I had to say, how did I get here and where do I want to go? But I realized one thing, that I could have easily taken food stamps. I could have easily gotten in welfare and got into the system. But that is not the road I chose. The reason I did not choose that road is because that is a dead-end road.

What Republicans are doing is opening up the road. We are not giving them the fish. We are teaching them to fish. We do not count how many people are on welfare. We count how many got off welfare and are productive members of society. That is what this revolution is about. I think tonight as the vote count is coming in, the revolution will continue.

I ask, Mr. Speaker, that this freshman class commit to, no matter what the media up here says, that we commit to the revolution of lower taxes and lower and less government.

Mr. HAYWORTH. I thank the gentleman from Texas. I would simply conclude by thanking our good friend

from North Carolina, having the foresight to schedule this special hour on an auspicious night where we rejoice in the fact that we changed things through ballots and not bullets, where we rejoice, in the freedom of our society, in the basic dignity of the American people which we hope again to empower through a revolution that is not radical but is reasonable, rational, and we will see through.

POLITICAL GAMESMANSHIP IN BASE CLOSINGS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. CHAMBLISS] for 60 minutes.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, tonight I am going to be joined by two of my distinguished colleagues on the Committee on National Security, my good friend, the gentleman from Utah [Mr. HANSEN], as well as my good friend, the gentleman from Oklahoma [Mr. WATTS]. We want to discuss an issue that is of great importance to our constituents.

It is also an issue that ultimately, Mr. Speaker, we view to be an issue of importance to every American, because it concerns the ability of our U.S. Air Force to protect this great Nation.

The issue is privatization in place, and it refers to a plan that has been hatched by the current administration in the White House, that makes military effectiveness and efficiency take a back seat to political gamesmanship. We will use the next hour to discuss the President's plan and offer our thoughts about the future of our military maintenance system.

Privatization in place is an issue that has come out of the White House recently because of the closing of two military bases, one in San Antonio, TX, Kelly Air Force Base, and one in California, McClellan Air Force Base. These two Air Force bases are two of the five air logistics centers that are currently operated by the U.S. Air Force.

What is the problem with the depot system? Why are we here tonight talking about the issue of privatization in place?

We are talking about that issue because of the fact that the Air Force has determined, and the Department of Defense has agreed, that we have excess capacity within the U.S. Air Force depot system from a maintenance standpoint. We have too much capacity out there to do the work that we have to do. Therefore, certain bases need to be considered from a downsizing standpoint or possibly from a closure standpoint.

The U.S. Congress has a mechanism in place called the BRAC process to deal with this specific issue. The BRAC process is not a very well thought of issue within this body. The reason is because it has a very drastic effect on areas where it is determined that bases

are no longer needed and must be closed.

But the BRAC process is a nonpolitical process that was established by this body and by the U.S. Senate several years ago, and is a process that is designed to take politics out of making decisions on whether or not military bases should remain open or whether or not military bases should be closed.

As everyone knows, since the end of the cold war we have been downsizing the size of the force structure of our various militaries. We have downsized the Air Force, we have cut back on the number of people that we have in that blue uniform. We have downsized the Army, the number that we have in that green uniform; and the Navy, the Coast Guard and so forth and so on.

As we continue to downsize our military, it is necessary that we look at other areas that serve that force structure. For example, with respect to the Air Force, we now have less airplanes than we had flying 10 years ago. We have less pilots to fly those airplanes. Therefore, we have less maintenance work to be done on those airplanes. That is why we have the excess capacity that has led to this issue of privatization in place.

The BRAC process, as I say, was not a very popular item within this House, but the BRAC Commission was established several years ago to review all of the military bases all across this country from the standpoint of can we afford to operate without those military bases due to the fact that we have begun to downsize the force structure.

We do not have as many people in uniform. We need to look to see whether or not we can make savings in the amount of money that the Government spends, not only from the standpoint of paying the salary of those personnel but from the standpoint of maintaining the airplanes, of maintaining the trucks, for maintaining tanks, for maintaining ships, whatever it may be with respect to each particular branch of the service. That is why BRAC was established.

During the past 6 years, we have had three BRAC Commissions to take action with respect to military bases all across this country. Those BRAC Commissions have taken into consideration the fact that we have downsized our force structure, and they have made decisions regarding certain military bases, be they depots or be they nondepots.

Those FRAC Commissions have made decisions that are not popular decisions within this body, to close military bases, but those decisions needed to be made.

They were good judgment decisions that have been made to make certain base closures.

In this particular instance, the BRAC Commission came to consider certain bases to determine whether or not they should be closed during the 1994 year and 1995 year. They considered the Air Force depots, of which there are five,

that maintain all of the Air Force equipment that is used by the personnel in this country.

Those five bases are Hill Air Force Base, which is located in Utah, represented by my friend, the gentleman from Utah [Mr. HANSEN], who has joined us; Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma, represented by our friend, the gentleman from Oklahoma [Mr. WATTS]; Robins Air Force Base in Warner Robins, GA; McClellan Air Force Base in Sacramento, CA; and Kelly Air Force Base in San Antonio, TX.

Those were the five U.S. Air Force depots that were in existence that were under consideration by the BRAC Commission.

At this time, I am going to ask my friend, the gentleman from Utah [Mr. HANSEN] if he will to step in and tell us a little bit about this, and explain a chart that he has there concerning the excess capacity issue that I have alluded to, why that issue was important and what the BRAC Commission decided with respect to that excess capacity.

Mr. HANSEN. I appreciate my friend, the gentleman from Georgia, yielding to me on this very important issue that he has brought up tonight, and I thank the gentleman for coming up with an issue that I think is so very important to the people of America.

Mr. Speaker, with permission of the gentleman from Georgia, I would like to explain a little about air logistics centers, if I may. Air logistics centers are some of the largest industrial complexes in the Department of Defense. They provide the critical maintenance and logistics support to sustain our ability to meet the national military strategy.

ALC's, along with other maintenance depots, Army arsenals and Navy shipyards, provide a ready and controlled source of technical competence and repair and maintenance capability to respond to our Nation's national security needs. This core maintenance capability must include sufficient skilled personnel and capital equipment and facilities owned and operated by the Department of Defense to meet any contingency or mobilization, and must be assigned sufficient work load to ensure cost efficiency and technical proficiency in time of peace.

That is what the Under Secretary of Logistics said, why a core depot maintenance capacity is so important. Core exists to minimize operational risk and to guarantee required readiness for these weapons systems.

Those reasons, to minimize risk and guarantee readiness, are even more important in today's leaner force structure, and in fact make the armed services' new policy of two-level maintenance possible. Under two-level maintenance, a weapons system is either fixed right at the unit level or shipped back for depot level repair. Only consolidated maintenance depots under the direct control of the Department of Defense can guarantee a full service,

flexible and on-time response for a predictable price in time of peace and war, without risking readiness for our troops in the field.

In the First District of Utah, I represent Hill Air Force Base which contains the Ogden Air Logistics Center. I am proud to say that Hill Air Force Base was the only installation in the Air Force to be rated in the top tier as both an operational base and a maintenance depot.

Let me just say a little about what Ogden ALC provides. Ogden is the logistics manager and depot for the world's largest aircraft fleet, the F-16, used by 21 nations around the world. Ogden is the world's largest overhaul facility for landing gear, struts, wheels and brakes, accommodating over 70 percent of DOD's work, with the capacity actually to do it all. Ogden is also the only maintenance site for the Nation's ICBM fleet, with a work force cited by the Vice President as heroes of reinvention.

These are just a few of the tremendous assets the Ogden ALC brings to the Air Force. In combination with two champion F-16 fighter wings in the vast Utah Test and Training Range, Hill Air Force Base is simply the best of the best.

In a January 1995 letter to the Secretary of Defense, the Commander of U.S. Air Force in Europe put it this way: "The combination of Hill Air Force Base," and I am quoting, "and Utah Test and Training Range is an irreplaceable national asset." I could not agree more.

While Hill Air Force Base represents the future fighter aircraft of the Air Force, it is Tinker Air Force Base in the great State of Oklahoma that is the future of jet engines. I have noticed, my friend from Georgia, that our friend from Oklahoma has joined us. I think that we should yield to him regarding Tinker.

□ 2045

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. CHAMBLISS] that I am delighted to be a part of this tonight and have an opportunity to talk about the BRAC process and the three facilities that survived the BRAC procedures.

I want to take an opportunity at this time to share a little bit about Tinker Air Force Base, which is there in the Fourth District of Oklahoma, the district I represent, in Midwest City, OK. My colleagues owe it to themselves to come and take a look at Tinker Air Force Base sometime. It is a state of the art facility for the repair and maintenance of the world's most sophisticated aircraft engines.

The work force is a blend of military, civilian and contractor support to provide for our fighting force the fabrication of parts to keep our most sophisticated aircraft, like the B-2 bomber, in a mission ready state, or the management of missiles, such as the air launch cruise missile, the short range attack

missile, the Navy's harpoon, and an advanced cruise missile.

Tinker has the responsibility of managing more than 17,000 jet engines. The Department of Defense' own depot maintenance operations indicators report states that during the period ending in the second quarter of fiscal year 1994 Tinker's average engine process days was greater than one-third, one-third better than the competition.

Additionally, Tinker's schedule indicator index for the period between April of 1993 and February of 1994 was the second best in the entire Air Force. Tinker is leading the fleet in the area of technology innovation and partnering. Tinker has formed a number of technology advancement coalitions to address a wide spectrum of environmental issues. One such venture will join all Department of Defense installations in Oklahoma as a coalition to cross feed information on compliance concerns or compliance actions and improve the partnership between the Environmental Protection Agency and other Federal agencies.

Also, Tinker has blazed a trail in alternative fuel use by adapting some 551 vehicles to run on propane, compressed natural gas, and electric battery power. Nearly 300 fleet vehicles have been converted to dual fuel clean natural gas, giving Tinker the distinction of having one of the largest dual fuel armadas in the Nation.

Tinker Air Force Base, as we went through the BRAC process, we continued to find that Tinker was well ahead of its competition and in productivity and efficiency. As a matter of fact, Tinker got out about 98 percent, or over 98 percent of its work on time.

The Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center entered into its first technology transfer agreement with private industry in November of 1994. The signing of the cooperative research and development agreement between Tinker and Savalitch Prosthetic and Research Center represents the first medical involvement for practical application between an air logistics center and a private entity.

There is a partnership between the Air Force and the Navy at Tinker Air Force Base. They share resources, some of the finest resources and skills and some of the best technology in human resources available.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I have visited several military facilities around the country, as I serve with these gentlemen on the Committee on National Security. So I have the opportunity to travel around the country and look at different Air Force facilities and ask questions. Of course, any time anyone goes into a military facility, they feel great pride knowing that they are on grounds of responsibility and commitment and sacrifice and dedication to protect our Nation's national resources or to protect our Nation's interests around the world.

I find it quite interesting to walk on the grounds of Tinker Air Force Base

and see how the general there, the commander, General Eichman, and his leadership and the management there and the civilian employees, the military employees, the contractors have created an air of expectancy, where they expect to be at the top of what they do. They expect to do things well. They expect to compete well, and they expect to come out ahead whenever they are given a task or given a challenge to do something for our Nation's forces.

I am just quite proud to be a part of Tinker and representing them in my district, and that even just makes me feel a little worse, as I understand the pride and the quality and the work that they do there, to be on the short end of this BRAC process, as the way it is being recommended by the President.

So with that, I will yield back to the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. CHAMBLISS].

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, may I ask the gentleman, has he commented on the strengths of Warner Robins, GA?

Mr. CHAMBLISS. I have not yet, but I will take a moment to do that. As my colleagues are both deservedly proud of the work done at Tinker and the work done at Hill, I cannot tell them how proud I am to represent the Eighth District of Georgia, which is the home of Robins Air Force Base in Warner Robins, GA.

Robins Air Force Base has a \$2.1 billion economic impact on the State of Georgia, and all of central Georgia sort of evolves around Robins. It is the largest industrial employer in the State of Georgia. I get filled with a sense of real pride every time I go on that military base and I see those men and women dressed in blue, knowing that not only the military but the civilian personnel at Robins Air Force Base are absolutely totally and firmly committed to ensure that they do the very best work on every job assigned to them.

At Robins Air Force Base we have worldwide management and engineering responsibility for several of the workhorses in Desert Storm, the F-15 Eagle, the C-130 Hercules, the C-141 Starlifter, home of the electronic warfare and avionic centers. We do all the maintenance work on the helicopters operated by the United States Air Force, and we do all special operations aircraft.

It was quite ironic that Robins Air Force Base competed with every other Air Force Base in the World over the last couple of years and received the award as the best Air Force Base in the whole world. It was really ironic that that announcement was made back in the spring, and the next week Robins Air Force Base was placed on the BRAC Commission list to be considered for closing.

Mr. Speaker, thank goodness we had a great experience in going through the BRAC process. As I worked with each of these gentlemen and some other gentlemen that were involved frankly in

representing Kelly and McClellan, it was competition that we all participated in. Our bases participated and our bases were fortunate to come out on top. We want to talk a little bit about what happened in that process and why we are here considering the privatization in place. But let us be clear about the fact that the personnel at McClellan Air Force Base and the Kelly Air Force Base are very capable and competent, but there are just valid reasons why bases need to be closed occasionally.

We went through the BRAC process. That is part of the reason why we are here tonight to talk about the privatization in place, and I yield back to the gentleman from Utah.

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman continuing to yield, and I appreciate we are all justly proud of these Air Force Bases we represent. People in America should realize these ALCs are some of the largest military bases in the world and the largest we have in the Air Force.

Now, the question comes down, the Navy has closed three out of their six aviation depots. If BRAC 95 goes through, as I recall, the Army will have six out of nine of theirs closed. But here of these depots are five ALCs. What is the problem? What are we talking here tonight? What is the problem the American people face?

The problem can be put into two words: Excess capacity. That is why we have this chart up here to show the people of America what we are talking about.

As everyone is aware, the Department of Defense has experienced dramatic downsizing over the last 6 years. In the wake of the victory of freedom and democracy over tyranny and communism and the end of the Cold War, our armed forces have experienced a real cut in spending of over 40 percent and a force structure reduction of over a third. Comparatively, even after full implementation of all three rounds of base closures, the department will only have closed 20 percent of its industrial capacity. In the Air Force, while we have only half the number of planes, we still have all five of the depots designed to maintain them.

As I pointed out, the Navy has closed three of six; the Army six of nine. Let us take a look at this chart.

The long black lines represent capacity, and they are fixed. Capacity in this sense measures industrial facilities and the design capability of real facilities and buildings. The only way to decrease this obvious excess capacity is to make the hard choices and close installations.

The white lines represent workload. These will continue to decline as we complete the downsizing of our armed forces.

The gray lines that we see show just how much of the current depot work loads are core and, as such, would remain in the organic depot system.

The problem displayed so clearly on this simple chart is obvious. Our depot

infrastructure does not match our current or planned workload and, thus, significantly increases the cost of each and every product by spreading a massive and expensive infrastructure over a smaller and smaller workload.

I guess the question we have to face is, how can we solve this problem and eliminate the capacity?

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, under this privatization-in-place plan, I believe Tinker's capacity would be around 42 percent. So, if the objective in the BRAC process was to eliminate capacity, as the gentleman from Georgia mentioned a few minutes ago, two words, excess capacity, they want to eliminate that, under this privatization-in-place plan, Tinker Air Force Base would have 42 percent of their capacity full.

It does not take a rocket scientist to see that the privatization-in-place process is going to create even more problems for the existing facilities. I think, again, it does not take a rocket scientist to understand that. The winners in this progression become the losers because we have even more capacity in all five of the air depot facilities around the country.

We have added to that excess capacity problem rather than resolving that problem, which is what the BRAC process was all about.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, let us put this in the perspective of a business decision, which really it is. This body runs the world's largest business. Unfortunately, if every other business in this country was run the way Congress has been run for the last 25 years, there would not be many left, because we have been spending more than we make.

What we have been talking about is the fact that we have capacity at all of the five Air Force depots all across the country to do a certain amount of work. We have capacity of 100 percent of the work that each base can produce. But what the gentleman from Oklahoma [Mr. WATTS] is saying is that at his base he is producing 42 percent of what he could produce. That is an excess of 58 percent up there, and it is about the same all the way across at all of our bases.

It only made sense for the BRAC commission to say, hey, something is not right here. We are costing the American taxpayer money by having all of these bases open and all of this excess capacity out there that is costing so much just to open the gates every morning. What we have to do is, from a business standpoint, we have got to close some of those bases to narrow that capacity down and try to provide for work to be done during surge periods, such as Desert Storm or any other catastrophe that might arise or war that may break out somewhere, we have to leave capacity there for that, but we can do that and, at the same time, save the American taxpayer billions and billions of dollars. And this is

the way we do it. We consolidate the work at less depots than what we have now.

Mr. Speaker, as the gentleman from Utah said, the Navy has done it, the Army has done it, and it was time for the Air Force to do it, and that is what we have done.

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, let me respond to what the gentlemen have both said.

I want to talk about the base analysis of how this came about. I do not know if the people in America realize that prior to the base closing law how many bases were closed. We know the answer to that was zero. Not one. Because any Congressman worth his salt could come in here and he could just stop it one way or another because all of his buddies did not want to have his closed.

□ 2100

So they would close them all. People would come in, and they would not allow them to be closed. And they would go out to their districts and brag how well they had done.

Was it necessary to do a base closing? I think absolutely it was necessary. There is no way we could continue with the amount of money we were putting in defense, when we were facing the old evil empire, the old Soviet Union. At that point we had to pour billions and billions of dollars into defense. And because of that, we were able to bring them to their knees.

I still remember when Mr. Gorbachev gave his concession speech. A man that I knew from the Soviet Union said, you spent us under the table. Your technology was so great. We could not run with you. You are way ahead of us.

Well, we did that, but then we cannot keep it going at that level. We all know that. It could not happen. So we passed the base closing law out of that. That is Public Law 101-510. It established the independent Base Closure and Realignment Commission. And incidentally, there is not one of those for parks, in case anyone wants to bring that up. This independent commission was designed to shield the difficult issue of base closure from the political pressure of an individual congressional district and political favoritism of the President and the administration. In other words, we said, Mr. President, you do not have anything to do with it. Congressman Oklahoma, Georgia, Utah, you guys do not have anything to do with it. We are going to put this independent commission there to get this job done. Because if the political element there is, it is not going to happen.

This process has worked well. We have closed well over 100 major installations with project savings of billions and billions of dollars. The reason it works is because decisions are made on certified, objective data designed to reevaluate military value and are reviewed by an independent BRAC commission. Each community, each politi-

cal leader, we are all given a shot. We all had our shot. We all realized our bases were on the base closing list. So we said, come on, you can go in there.

They came to our bases respectively. We toured them around. We made the best pitch. We got people in there from our community to put up thousands of dollars. They had bands playing and kids yelling and giving out lollipops and the whole bit to try to influence the BRAC commission. And every one was a big boy. We all knew we were taking our chances, but the main thing was not the balloons and the lollipops. The main thing was the information that they got from where? From the Pentagon.

And I happen to have here a base analysis, and this was flashed up in front of the BRAC commission, put there by the U.S. Air Force. I recalled, as you gentlemen did, on the last day when the BRAC commission decided whether or not to close some of these ALCs. The Navy has done it. The Air Force has done it.

They asked the question, is this the chart you looked at, will you stand by that chart? And the answer from the Secretary of the Air Force, General Fogleman, was yes, we stand by that chart.

As you both pointed out, we have nothing against our good friends at McClellan. We have nothing against our good friends at San Antonio, but they came in last in both these instances. So it was easy for the BRAC commission to look at this. Look at the tiers. Look at how they rated them. Look at the cost to close. Look at the annual savings, the return on investment, the economic impact. It was simple to do that. It did not take a rocket scientist to look that up. This was the military. This was the Air Force's own version of what should happen.

It is not something that we came up with, even though we were doing our very best to show the best side of our bases, and we were right, our bases were excellent. But it came up from those people.

We know about the BRAC process in my home State of Utah. Utah has had a base closed every round of BRACC. From 1987 to 1993, Utah dropped from 5th to 15th in defense-related expenditures. With the closure of the second largest employer in the State, Twill Army Depot in BRACC 1993, Utah has dropped from 23d to 48th nationally in total defense dollars in the State. And we had to go through that. We cannot selfishly say, yes, hurt you, hurt them and do not hurt me. That was the reason behind BRACC.

And now the question comes up, what did the 1995 BRACC commission decide and why? Would either of my colleagues like to respond?

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Well, what the BRAC commission decided was that it was time to look very closely at the five Air Force depots and make a decision as to whether or not any of them

ought to be closed as opposed to the downsizing in place of all five, as was recommended by the Air Force. The Air Force wanted to keep them all five open just in case there was a major outbreak of war. And they had a plan designed where they thought they could keep operating, but the BRAC commission thought that was not the right thing to do.

The BRAC commission took the numbers that the gentleman has on the chart right there and went down the list of each of the eight criteria that the BRAC commission set forth. And they made a decision based on the consideration of all of those eight criteria that it was in the best interest of this country from a taxpayer standpoint and from a national security standpoint that two of those bases be closed, that we could handle all of the depot maintenance capacity at Hill Air Force Base, at Tinker Air Force Base and at Robins Air Force Base. Based upon their decision to do that, they made the recommendation that those two bases be closed.

And it was right interesting what evolved from that decision, which was made back July 1, I believe, is the date that that was done and the President had about 15 days to come back and either accept that recommendation along with the BRAC recommendation with respect to all other bases all across the country, or he could reject it. And then Congress had the same option of either accepting it or rejecting it. And it was interesting that the president started playing politics immediately.

There are 53 electoral votes in California. There is 40 something in Texas. Those two States are very important to any President who wants to get reelected. He knew that this would have a negative, closing of those two bases would have a negative effect on his reelection campaign in 1996. So what did he do? He began immediately playing the role of what can I do to preserve my position with respect to those two huge military facilities and hopefully be able to save the votes that are going to be necessary for me to secure the electoral votes in California and Texas.

And I have in front of me the letter that the President wrote back to the Congress when he reported back on his decision following the BRAC commission's recommendation. I would like to read just a couple of sentences out of there because we want to get both of you gentlemen to talk about what privatization in place is and why we are here tonight talking about it.

The President said as follows:

In a July 8, 1995 letter to Deputy Secretary of Defense White, Chairman Dixon confirmed that the commission's recommendations permit the Department of Defense to privatize the work loads of the McClellan and Kelly facilities in place or elsewhere in their respective communities. The ability of the Defense Department to do this mitigates the economic impact on those communities while helping the Air Force avoid the disruption in readiness that would result from relocation

as well as preserve the important defense work forces there.

First of all, let me just say, did the gentleman from Oklahoma have any conversation with members of the BRAC commission concerning this issue of privatizing in place that the President has referred to here?

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Yes, I did. It is interesting, before I get into some of the letters I had written, I wrote all of the commissioners of BRAC and they reported back to me. I got responses back from several of them. I will read those here in just a second. But it is quite interesting to me that these commissioners had a very, very difficult job to go into these communities, every one of these communities, these five different communities, Hill, Tinker, Robins, Kelly, and McClellan, go into these communities and look in the eyes of every one of the taxpayers, every one of the people in those communities that were dependent on these jobs and finally conclude that these two have to be closed is what we are going to recommend for closure. That was a very, very difficult job.

I think it is a sad commentary on what the President has done and just kind of, in my opinion, kind of backhanding the commissioners and saying, I am going to ignore all the trials and tribulations and difficulties and burdens you went through and try to be fair and being apolitical and saying we are not going to play politics, Republican or Democrat, and we are not going to consider that one is in Oklahoma City or in Georgia, Utah, California, Texas, that is not important to us. We are after excess capacity. Went in and made some difficult decisions. They recommended two facilities be closed. And they also went on to say that over a 7-year period of time that if these recommendations were implemented or executed, that \$19 billion, \$19 billion would be saved over a matter of 7 years.

When you talk about the electoral votes in California and Texas, that tells me that if the President is going to ignore saving \$19 billion over the next 7 years because of electoral votes, that is a pretty doggone expensive campaign, \$19 billion. That is, boy, you are talking about campaign reform. We really need campaign reform from that.

As you said, my friend from Georgia shared that I have written the commissioners and got some responses back from them. I want to share with you, with my colleagues, what I got back from these commissioners, the response that I got back from several of them.

First of all, I had written a letter asking them questions about what their intentions were, did they intend to privatize in place or recommend that or encourage that. And I shared with them a letter that the President had proposed for the privatize-in-place option for McClellan and Kelly air logistics centers. However, I questioned

the viability and merit of this plan. Simply put, I have thought through Dr. White's proposal and cannot make sense out of it. A few questions come to mind, and I asked them these questions.

My primary concern results from an apparent contortion of the BRAC recommendations. By any reasonable standard, the winners appear now to be the losers, and I refuse to accept that after the long and hard battle was fought and won by Tinker Air Force Base and the other two facilities, how privatization in place results in reducing excess capacity cited by the BRAC commission without reducing infrastructure at the three other air logistics centers.

I went on to ask, did the BRACC truly intend privatization in place as a viable option for McClellan and Kelly. I know it was recommended at two of the other locations, but why was it not specifically mentioned for McClellan and Kelly if it was intended as a BRACC recommendation? If privatization in place is such a good idea, why was this strategy not brought to light in hearings or at the final vote?

Why was privatization in place not mentioned as part of the Air Force's original proposal? How does privatization in place at McClellan and Kelly provide for and enhance national security position?

I believe, and I shared with the commissioners, I said, I believe in the BRACC and do not want to see a political strategy overtake a responsible and reasonable approach to downsizing our defense structure. I encouraged them to give me an apolitical answer. I shared with them a letter. I seek an apolitical answer to these questions. And these are some of the comments that I got back as I went through the responses.

One of the commissioners said:

Moreover, not allowing the remaining ALCs, all of which ranked higher in military value, to compete for the additional workload would cause them to become increasingly less cost competitive in the future. Even beyond common sense issues of most effectively utilizing our limited defense resources, I am at a loss to understand why it would be in the Air Force's interest to protect its lowest ranking depots at the expense of its three superior installations.

He went on to say:

As difficult as it was to vote for the closure of two facilities of this size and quality, the commission voted 6 to 2 to do so because we felt that it was in the best interest of the air force, DOD and the American taxpayers.

This is one I really found interesting:

If any commissioner had offered a motion to privatize in place as the President proposes, I am 100 percent certain that such a motion would have been defeated handily.

That sounds like to me that this commissioner is pretty confident that this privatization in place or deal was never meant to be by any of the commissioners.

Mr. HANSEN. Is the gentleman saying, from what he has in front of him, that the commissioners said, if that

motion had been made by any one of the eight commissioners to privatize in place like the President of the United States is now changing the BRACC law to do, that it would have been soundly defeated? Is that what they said?

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Soundly defeated. As a matter of fact, the words of the commissioner were, "I am 100 percent certain that it would have been defeated unanimously." "I am at a loss to understand why" were some of the other comments that I got from the response. I am at a loss to understand why it would be in the Air Force's best interest, as I said, to protect its lowest ranking depots at the expense of its three superior installations. We had one commissioner that said, he did not provide a written response to me but I talked to him on the phone.

□ 2115

He said, "Privatization in place would not have been approved if offered before the BRACC." I said one Commissioner told me they were 100 percent certain it would have been defeated unanimously. Do you stand behind that? He said, "You bet I do. I, too, am 100 percent certain that it would have been defeated unanimously." There is another Commissioner who said, "The Commission's review clearly documented significant excess capacity in the five Air Force logistics centers. Privatization in place of all of the workload of Sacramento and San Antonio air logistics centers could result in privatizing excess capacity rather than eliminating it." That was the objective of the BRACC, to eliminate the excess capacity, not privatize it.

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I think this is fascinating, what the two gentlemen have brought up, absolutely damning evidence, if I may say so. First, the BRAC Commission took the response from the Air Force. We all know the Air Force said, "Keep all five of them open." The BRAC Commission looked at it and said, "We've got too much excess capacity," which is what we are talking about.

The General Accounting Office reviewed that and agreed completely with the BRAC Commission. There were so many. So here are the words that the BRAC Commission came up with in the final report after they had done this exhaustive study, all of this work with all these high-paid staffers. "The Commission found that significant excess capacity and infrastructure in the Air Force depot system requires closure of McClellan Air Force Base and the San Antonio Air Logistics Center, and the Commission found the closure of the McClellan Air Force Base and San Antonio Logistics Center permits significantly improved utilization of the remaining depots and reduces DOD operating costs."

So if we go to this next chart, we see if we close those in this capacity, here we are without BRACC, and here we are with BRACC. We are now up to 73 percent. That is about where we ought

to be, considering that contingencies come along. We do not know when it is going to play that peak and valley thing predicated upon conditions in the world, so this is principal, the ultimate place to be, 73 percent.

However, you gentlemen have both brought another factor into this. After the BRACC wisely made this decision, after they had finished their work which they had to do under public law, they then submitted it to the President of the United States. May I ask the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. CHAMBLISS] what were the choices the President had under the law as you understand it by your legal mind?

Mr. CHAMBLISS. The President had the right to either accept the recommendations of BRACC or reject the recommendation of BRACC. There was not option one way or the other.

Mr. HANSEN. I would ask the gentleman, does he have any third alternative to this? Does the law say you could bring an additional thing to it, or does he just have those two options?

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Those are the only two options he had.

Mr. HANSEN. That is the way the gentleman from Oklahoma understands it.

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. That was my understanding. The President called a play that was not in the playbook. What he was doing was never an option, it was never intended by the Commissioners of BRACC. I think those charts are very telling of the dilemma that this privatization-in-place plan puts the Air Force in.

Mr. HANSEN. Those of us who were here when that law went through and those of us who argued it thought it was crystal clear. Our attorneys thought it was crystal clear. The Pentagon attorneys thought it was crystal clear. At that time the Reagan and Bush administration thought it was crystal clear, or I guess it was the Bush administration. They thought it was all crystal clear.

Now we come along and, all of a sudden we have a new play that was not in the playbook.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. If it was not crystal clear, why was not the privatization-in-place issue brought up by the White House prior to the time the BRACC decision was made?

Mr. HANSEN. A great question to bring up, is it not?

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Also what if Tinker Air Force Base and/or Robbins Air Force Base and/or Hill Air Force Base had been closed? Did you gentlemen receive any indication that the President would have stepped forward and, said "Mr. WATTS, we want to privatize in place out at Oklahoma City and keep your employees out there and continue to pay these folks?" Was that ever mentioned to you?

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. That was never mentioned, no.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. No.

Mr. HANSEN. Possibly for this discussion tonight, we should read into

the RECORD what the law really says, so people who are listening could see this for themselves. Public law 101-510 states:

If the President approves all the recommendations of the Commission, the President shall transmit a copy of said recommendation to the Congress, and if the President disapproves the recommendation of the Commission, in whole or in part, the President shall transmit to the Commission and the Congress the reasons for the disapproval. The Commission shall transmit to the President a revised list of recommendations. The law gives the President no authority to forward the list of recommendations to the Congress with any changes or specific guidelines for its implementation.

If that is the case, what happened here? What did we get out of this after the President of the United States looked at the recommendation that the BRAC Commission worked all that time on, all that money, all that effort, all that work of the best heads in America? What did we get?

As the gentleman from Georgia brought up, no one had ever heard of this term "privatization". Where did this idea come from? If that is the case, there are 71 bases out there besides the ones we are talking about tonight, and I bet if we send a letter to the folks there, do you know what they would say? "Privatize me, too. How come I am being discriminated against? Privatize me, defense depot Ogden, Tooele Army depot," as I mentioned, in my State, and we can mention in all the States the same thing, "Privatize us."

But the gentleman from Georgia and the gentleman from Oklahoma hit upon why that is. It seems abundantly clear, and sadly, too, I may add; 52 electoral votes in one State and 47 in another State. Why would the President make those promises when he knew he would be in violation?

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. If the gentleman will continue to yield, I think it is very clear, and I want to reiterate that again, this privatization-in-place plan was not about jobs, it was about one job, the job that allows you to occupy that big white house down there on Pennsylvania Avenue. Again, I just think it is really unfortunate that we have circumvented a very—that a very sound, apolitical process has been circumvented. I think, too, this hurts the credibility of a system that has been used for some time, the BRACC process, and I think it obviously will hurt the credibility of the BRACC process if we ever go through this again, simply because people just will not have any confidence in it anymore, so we are not just fighting for the facilities that we represent. We are fighting for the integrity of the process, the integrity of those Commissioners that went in and faced those citizens and those taxpayers.

I remember, the day after the recommendation had been made public, seeing the Oklahoma City paper the next day and seeing the faces of some of the people down in San Antonio that had been around for 37, 38 years and

had been employed there, and people were talking about what they were going to do now.

To have the Commissioners go through that torture of making some very, very difficult decisions, and any one of the three of us could have been in the same position, going into the process. We did not know who was going to be saved, we did not know who was going to make the cut. We had no idea. All I had ever asked in the process is, judge us on our merits, judge us on our quality, judge us on the standards of the leadership at Tinker and the community of Midwest City and the surrounding communities, and the employees and the contractors of Tinker. Judge us on the standard that they have created for themselves, created of expectancy, judge us on that. We can live with that.

We went through that, we won, and through this process now all three of us become the losers.

Mr. HANSEN. Do you not think that the United States of America and this Congress and the administration owes a great debt to eight very courageous people?

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. That is right.

Mr. HANSEN. They did one whale of a job. The others were good. I have lived through those. I think these eight individuals did a super job. They laid politics aside and they did what they thought was the best for America, and no one moved the goalpost on them, no one came up with some new rules. They played by the rules they knew.

I guess the question we have to look at as we wind up our special order here tonight is, does the President have the right—he did not have the right, which is very clear with everybody, and I do not know anyone that disputes that, that he had the right to privatize. That was not even part of it. It was not even a consideration in the entire BRACC hearing. No one even brought it up until he did. Then the question comes up: Would he have the right to privatize under the law of the land as we know and understand the law? Is anybody above the law?

I sat on the Ethics Committee for 12 years and I went through 29 cases. In those 29 cases, from time to time we would find a Member of Congress who thought he could bend it, break it, or get away with something. I remember distinctly being in charge on the Republican side of the check-cashing area, and how many of our colleagues thought that they could bounce checks. A lot of them, they would go to jail if they were in the private sector; but no, they went ahead and did it, and did not think it would ever come home to roost.

I remember one President that we all honor and respect, FDR, who thought he could pack the Court. That blew up in his face. There is no man who is above the law. There is no woman above the law.

Now I would like to put up another chart which shows four specific parts of

the law that privatization would violate. I would like to know if someone could respond as to how anyone thinks they could get around this, or why they should, or why it even should be on the table.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. As the gentleman mentioned, this is a bipartisan issue, too. This has happened to Democratic Presidents, it has happened to Republican Presidents. When they were called and asked, "Why are you violating the law?" when they do not have a response to it, that they have to be dealt with accordingly.

Mr. HANSEN. I would like to point out here in this chart, if people could see, we have four specific areas of the law. We give the code number. You are welcome to look it up, debate it, talk about it, and bring it into your legal circuit. This one identifies a requirement for core organic logistic functions. This second one requires studies and reports to Congress prior to transfer of work from DOD civilian to contracted performance. The third one requires no more than 40 percent of depot-level maintenance performed by private contractors. The fourth one requires merit-based competition prior to transfer of any workload valued over \$3 million per year.

I do not think any of us do not think that something should be privatized. Of course something should be. But Congress has established the rules of what can and cannot be. I do not think any of us want to turn around and say to the industrial defense complex, "You have the whole thing. You fly the airplanes. You take care of it. You drive the tanks. You drive the submarines." It would not work. We would lose. We know that.

How do you say to a McDonnell Douglas, "Pack up and go to the Persian Gulf and fight right now?" They are private people. They do not work for the Government. We have to maintain that. Whether it is right I guess is debated, but we think that we have worked out a good compromise between core maintenance work done at our military installations, our depots, and what goes to the private sector. That is the issue that we are looking at here.

I would hope that the President of the United States, that Mr. White over at the Pentagon, that Secretary Perry in the Pentagon and all those people, and especially their legal heads, would carefully examine these four requirements that we have in front of us at this point, fully knowing the Congress will not back down from this stand, that we fully intend to carry this out to its conclusion, and if they do not like that, they should change the law.

Every one of us in our lives have been at the dinner table or at a meeting with our friends or at a public meeting of the PTA and somebody gets all excited and says, "Doggone it, something is wrong here." The answer is, "Change it, then." I think most of the 435 of us who are in this Chamber are here be-

cause we wanted to change the law somewhere. We wanted to see a different direction for America. We wanted to see something happen.

We do not say "violate it" when people come up to me and say, "You do not have to pay your taxes." Do you know what is going to happen to you? You are going to be looking out the other side of the bars, because you have to pay your taxes. If you do not like that, run for Congress and get it changed. If Mr. White, Mr. Perry, and Mr. Bill Clinton do not like this, then change it, but right now this is the law of the land, and I expect the President of the United States, the Secretary of Defense, and all of us to uphold the law. What is so wild about that?

Mr. CHAMBLISS. The gentleman makes a good point on the issue of privatization. We happen to all three be Republicans. We believe in privatization. We think we need to get the Federal Government more out of our daily lives and out of our business lives than we have right now. I think all three of us are totally committed to trying to downsize the Federal Government. We think the Federal Government is doing too many things now that we ought not to be doing.

But there is one key difference in privatizing military depots and privatizing other agencies where the Federal Government is involved. That issue is exactly what the gentleman just spoke to. In times such as Desert Storm, times of Korea and times of Vietnam, and going all the way back in every war that we have fought, we have had military personnel going to the scene of the battles, going to the location where wars were fought and making sure that our tanks ran, that they started when we turned the switch, that our airplanes flew, that our ships rode high in the seas to provide the security that this country demands. If we do not have that security, then we will never remain the world's greatest military power. Thus, we will never remain the world's greatest country that we are right now.

□ 2130

I think it is absolutely ludicrous to think that we can go to the private sector and say, okay, you hire folks, train them, and tell them that if war breaks out, they have to go dodge bullets, they have to go stand on the front lines and make repairs to the vehicles and the airplanes and the ships or whatever it may be that the military is going to require, and you have to get those people on line and have them ready to go and dodge those bullets; we know that is not going to happen. We have good, qualified, trained military personnel to carry out those functions now. That is the difference in the privatization that we are talking about right now and the privatization of other agencies that we have in this country.

Mr. Speaker, a good example of privatization is Fannie Mae. Fannie Mae

is something that was privatized years ago. It works well. It got the government out of that particular business of financing. The government was losing money in it. We turned it over to the private sector. It works. Let us not do something that is going to make us look back 10 years from now and say gee whiz, why in the world did we ever think that we could turn the maintaining of military equipment over to the private sector and cost the lives of our young men and women who are going to the forefront of the battle.

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I have nothing further to say, except that I think what we have tried to do is state the facts and that is what we have done. The gentleman from Utah [Mr. HANSEN] has four different statutes there before us that all Americans can see. Anyone that would be a proponent of privatization in place can see that you can neither circumvent, nor ignore, what is on the books.

So I think we have spoken the facts this evening. I think we have shared with the American people how the President has just totally ignored the law, and I think it is important that we continue to fight this battle and continue to say to all of those that would support this effort of privatization in place that it will not work.

One more thing, Mr. Speaker, before I yield back to the gentleman from Utah, is that it is interesting how I have been contacted by, and my office has been contacted by people out at Kelly saying that we do not want to privatize in place. We would prefer that these jobs go to Tinker or Utah. We would prefer that they go there and give us the opportunity to follow these jobs.

So the employees, many of the employees at Kelly have said, we are not even supportive of the privatization in place. So again, there are a lot of statutes, a lot of law, a lot of common sense and wisdom surrounding this thing, and those who are proponents of this privatization effort, they are just totally ignoring these laws.

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I think the gentleman makes an excellent point. Those people that have worked long and hard, many of those people have come into being civilian workers for the military, and have been there many, many years, and now privatization in place does not mean any sure bet for them, none whatsoever. But if their job moves, they could move with their job, and that is something that a lot of them would want, to see out their careers, to retire as Federal employees. Can anyone fault them for that? I cannot.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make one point, and that is, when we stand up and debate in this hall about the authorization of the defense bill, we have people stand up constantly and say, the Cold War is over, we do not need submarines, we do not need bombers, we do not need fighters, we do not need all

of these things. Why do we have them? Let us put it in some social program.

Admittedly, some of the social programs have their genesis in very worthwhile projects, some of them probably do not. But it really amazes me that America today, most of us, the three of us here, those in this room, those people that are listening at this particular time, were able to raise our families, get our education, get to whatever professional thing we wanted to do, build our business, because we were all raised for the last 40 years with a nuclear sword over our heads. But we did that without firing the shot that everyone thought would be.

When I first came to Congress there was a survey done that said, 85 percent of the people in America felt there would be an exchange between the old Soviet Union and the United States by the turn of the century. Well, that did not happen, and it did not happen because Congress, America, basically, had the will and the wisdom to keep a strong core maintenance of people keeping this Nation free.

So a lot of us have gone on criticizing the government, doing what we do in our business, whatever we want to do, and you have done it because there has been a strong military presence in the world today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Utah [Mr. HANSEN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, are there any bad guys left out there that we need this for? Well, think about it. I also sit on the Committee on Intelligence. I am not saying anything that should not be said, but we all know there is a lot of bad guys still there. They may be bad guys, but they are not dumb guys, and they know very well what they could do to this country and would very likely like to do if they had the option to do it.

When we had our trips over to the Persian Gulf, does anyone think Saddam Hussein would not mind lobbing two or more in here? Do you think Kim Il-sung likes us any better? Do you think some of these other nations are our best friends? No, they are not.

You go to work every morning, you send your kids to school, you have the benefits and beauties and blessings of his country, and a lot of it is because we have fine young men and young women who have the courage to keep this Nation free. The least we can do for them is give them the right and adequate equipment, depots, airplanes, to keep this Nation free. We cannot let down on that promise. We would be betraying our oath of office if we did.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, the gentleman makes an excellent point that the Cold War certainly is over. The Soviet Union is not a threat to us right now, although they may become a threat again. We do not know where it may be 10 years from now; it is in some uproar over there right now.

As Members of the Committee on National Security, we have been debating a very hot issue in our committee, and that is Bosnia. I bet if you took a vote among the three of us, I think all three of us would be voting the same way of having very grave doubts about whether or not we ought to ever send troops to Bosnia. Unfortunately, the President appears to be headed in that direction.

We have airplanes flying over there right now. We had one airplane shot down over there. That pilot I think took some resolve in the fact that he knew that his rescue team was going to be Americans flying in there in American-made equipment and American-maintained equipment. Those are the type of things that our military personnel right now rely on. They know that their equipment is maintained by the very best that America has to offer, and it always will be, as long as we maintain the depot structure in all of our military branches. But if we ever get outside of it, if we lose control of it, we will never get that control back again.

Let me just say that I thank both of you for participating in this tonight, and I think we are about to wind down, and as the gentleman from Utah said a little earlier, the three of us, and I would venture to say that most everybody in this body, intends to take this issue head-on with the Department of Defense and with the White House and we are going to win it. We are going to ensure that our depots are maintained and that our men and women that wear the uniforms in this country always have equipment that is maintained by military personnel in the best manner possible. Thank you very much.

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BUNN of Oregon). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. NEAL].

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. NEAL] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. NEAL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 40 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 2300

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 115, FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 1996

Mr. GOSS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 104-326) on the resolution (H. Res. 257) providing for the consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 115) making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 1996, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 11 a.m. tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DREIER). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for the week, on account of medical reasons.

Mrs. MYRICK (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for today, on account of illness.

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. WISE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. DELAURO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. WISE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. POMEROY, for 5 minutes, today.

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

Mr. TATE, for 5 minutes, on November 9.

Mrs. SEASTRAND, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SHADEGG, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCINTOSH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EHRLICH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. METCALF, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KIM, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HAYWORTH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan, for 5 minutes each day, today and on November 8.