

resolution by refusing to remove from its conference report the language that would kill operational weapons testing in the Pentagon.

This news is disheartening, indeed, Mr. President. Repealing the law that established independent weapons testing would be an irresponsible, unthinkable course, and dangerously shortsighted. If this Office's charter is revoked, countless American lives will be at risk. Furthermore, the entire system by which we acquire new weapons will be pushed back to the dark ages. We will undoubtedly be bringing back the unthinkable conflict of interest of the students grading their own exams, when it comes to evaluating the results of critical weapons testing.

Last Friday, after learning that the Testing Office was, indeed, in jeopardy and in danger of being eliminated, Senator ROTH, Senator GRASSLEY and myself sent a letter to Chairman THURMOND and to Chairman SPENCE, expressing our outrage over the apparent desire to repeal section 139 of title X. In this letter, Mr. President, we call on the conferees to maintain our legislation that created the Operational Testing Office.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of this letter that we sent to Chairman THURMOND and to Chairman SPENCE be printed in the RECORD directly following my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. PRYOR. I gladly join my good friends from the other side of the aisle in voting our strong bipartisan support for independent weapons testing. This Office has always enjoyed support from each side of the aisle. I hope it always will. It was created in this spirit. I certainly hope that it does not die under a cloud of partisanship.

I would like my views to be known clearly and publicly before the conferees conclude their deliberations on the Defense authorization bill. I know they will take heed of the remarks of my colleague and good friend, Senator ROTH, who just delivered his eloquent speech on the floor of the Senate with regard to this issue.

If this conference report comes to the Senate, Mr. President, with language that revokes the charter of our weapons testing office, I will strongly oppose the conference report and I will ask it be rejected by the entire U.S. Senate.

As we prepare to send American troops into Bosnia, it would be wrong—absolutely, totally wrong—to eliminate the most important checks and balances in the military procurement chain that has proven to save time, money, and most importantly, the lives of our fighting forces. The American taxpayers, the American men and women in uniform, deserve much better.

I thank the Chair for recognizing me. I yield the floor.

EXHIBIT 1

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, December 1, 1995.

Hon. STROM THURMOND,
Chairman, Senate Armed Services Committee,
SR 228, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: We are writing to voice our strenuous objection to an action the defense authorization conference committee is considering that would jeopardize independent operational and live-fire weapons testing in the Department of Defense. We believe that what is at stake are the lives of our men and women who serve in the armed forces.

As you know, the conference committee is currently discussing various measures to streamline the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). We are aware that the conference committee is considering repealing section 139 of Title 10. Repealing Section 139 would eliminate the authority of the Director, Operational Test and Evaluation (DOT&E) to oversee, evaluate, and report on the operational worth of weapons prior to their production and procurement by the U.S. government.

The DOT&E office was created 12 years ago with strong bipartisan support. Its existence has been critical to Congressional and Pentagon efforts to promote a "fly-before-you-buy" approach to the multi-billion dollar arena of military acquisitions.

Section 139 of Title 10 is the foundation upon which this important contribution to DOD procurement is based. Since its enactment, this provision has saved time, money, and most importantly, the lives of our soldiers and sailors who must rely on tested, proven weapons. We truly believe that any decision by the conference committee to repeal section 139 would result in many unintended consequences.

Eliminating this office would not eliminate the requirement to conduct testing under realistic operational conditions. However, it would raise the question as to who would be responsible for approving test plans and for providing independent evaluations of testing. This uncertainty would be costly indeed.

We appreciate the conferees' desire to streamline the Office of the Secretary of Defense. However, the Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act recently enacted by Congress merged live-fire testing with the operational testing function. Thus, independent testing oversight has already been streamlined. Furthermore, the DOT&E office is already one of the smallest in the Pentagon bureaucracy.

This directorate has proven itself as one of the most important checks and balances in the DOD procurement system. Its value has been lauded by our two most recent Secretaries of Defense. After Operation Desert Storm, former Defense Secretary Dick Cheney said that the vigorous, independent testing oversight put in place by Congress "saved more lives" than perhaps any other single initiative. Current Defense Secretary Perry recently described the DOT&E as "the conscience of the acquisition process."

In August, the U.S. Senate unanimously approved a Sense of the Senate resolution that stated clearly the Senate's opposition to repealing section 139 of Title 10. We continue to believe that repealing the law that guides independent weapons testing is wrong and dangerously shortsighted.

Clearly the question facing Congress is do we care more about reducing the size of OSD or protecting the lives of our service men and women. We firmly believe that if the provisions repealing section 139 are not removed, Congress will be putting countless lives at risk in the name of reducing a handful of billets.

We urge you to continue the bipartisan Congressional support for independent testing by deleting from your conference report any provisions that would repeal section 139 of Title 10.

Thank you for your consideration of this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM V. ROTH, Jr.
CHARLES E. GRASSLEY.
DAVID PRYOR.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CAMPBELL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

FLAG DESECRATION CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT—MOTION TO PROCEED

The Senate continued with the consideration of the motion to proceed.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I wanted to just add some information for my colleagues about some of the ambassadors that I have been discussing this morning and so far today about the qualifications of these people. These are individuals that have been nominated by the President. There are 18 of them that are presently pending in the Foreign Relations Committee. They are an outstanding group of nominees.

I was just provided with more detailed information about what they have been doing in their careers and why they are considered by the President to be qualified for these important positions. So I thought I would go through some of that information so that any Senator who has a doubt about the qualifications of any nominee would hopefully have that doubt put to rest. I do not know many of these people myself, but I would like to at least put in the RECORD the information about them.

Mr. President, going down the list, the President's nominee to Sri Lanka is Mr. Peter Burleigh, who is presently the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Personnel. He is a career appointee in the Department of State. He has been with the Department of State now for some substantial period of time. He was a Peace Corps volunteer before that. He has a very distinguished résumé which we will include in the RECORD.

The second of these nominees is the President's nominee for APEC, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation. This person, Sandra Kristoff, is now the coordinator in that position, and she is being nominated by the President for the rank of Ambassador in that same position—again, a very distinguished career of involvement in foreign policy and trade related issues.

The third on this list is John Malott, who has been nominated by the President as the Ambassador to Malaysia.

He is presently the senior adviser to the Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business and Agricultural Affairs. He is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service at the class of minister-counsellor, clearly a very distinguished and recognized public servant in our diplomatic corps.

Next is Mr. Kenneth Quinn, Kenneth Michael Quinn, who has been nominated by the President to the position of Ambassador to Cambodia. He is presently a special project officer for the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs in the Department of State—again, a career of foreign service, class of minister-counsellor.

I would just point out parenthetically here, Mr. President, that I can remember years in which we had great debates on the Senate floor expressing concerns about the political nature of the appointments being made by one or another President to some ambassadorial positions. In this group of 18, all but 4 of the 18 are career Foreign Service officers, have devoted their entire career to working in our diplomatic corps, and the four who are not career Foreign Service officers I think are recognized by all to be well qualified to take important positions like this.

After the Ambassador to Cambodia is Mr. William Itoh, the President's appointee as Ambassador to the Kingdom of Thailand, presently a student in the Capstone Program at the National Defense University—again, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service with the class of counsellor.

Next is a gentleman I referred to in my statement this morning, Mr. Stapleton Roy, who has been nominated by the President as Ambassador to the Republic of Indonesia. He again is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of career minister. I would point out that he was born in China. He has spent much of his life in the Far East and China in particular. He is extremely well recognized as an expert on that part of the world and has served our country extremely well in important positions including Ambassador to China. He now, of course, is being considered for this other very important position for which I hope we can confirm him.

The next after Mr. Roy is Thomas Simons, Jr., who is nominated by the President as the Ambassador to Pakistan. He is presently the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance for the New Independent States. His Foreign Service grade is career member of the Senior Foreign Service, a career diplomat, as many of these nominees are, and somebody who clearly has earned the respect and confidence of the President.

Next is Frances Cook, who has been nominated by the President to be the Ambassador to Oman, presently the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Political Military Affairs—again, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service.

Next is Richard Henry Jones, who has been nominated by the President

as Ambassador to Lebanon. And again we have a person who at the present time serves as Director of the Office of Egyptian Affairs in the Department of State, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service with a class of counsellor.

Next is James Collins. Mr. Collins has been nominated by the President as Ambassador-at-Large and Special Adviser to the Secretary of State for the New Independent States, and again a career member of the Senior Foreign Service with the class of minister-counsellor, also a very distinguished career which I think well equips him for that position.

Next is Charles Twining, who has been nominated by the President as Ambassador to the Republic of Cameroon, presently the Ambassador to Cambodia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service with the class of minister-counsellor—again, a very distinguished public servant in our diplomatic corps.

Next is James Joseph. The President has nominated James Joseph as Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa. He presently is the president of the Council on Foundations and has a very distinguished career in a great many different areas, but obviously has the President's confidence.

Next is Joan Plaisted. Joan Plaisted is the President's nominee as Ambassador to the Republic of the Marshall Islands, now presently serving as Director of the Office of Thailand and Burma Affairs in the Department of State, another career member in the Senior Foreign Service with the class of counsellor.

Next is Don Gevirtz, who has been nominated as Ambassador to the Republic of Fiji, to the Republic of Nauru, to the Kingdom of Tonga and Tuvalu—again, a very distinguished individual whose present position is chairman of the board and chief executive officer of the Foothill Group, Inc., in California.

Next is our own former colleague, Senator Jim Sasser, who is presently an attorney here in the District of Columbia as well as in Nashville, TN, earlier this year was a fellow of Harvard University and is now, of course, the President's nominee as Ambassador to Beijing. And I think all of us who have served with him would agree that he will perform in an exemplary fashion in that position as he would in any position for which the President would nominate him.

Next is David Rawson, whom the President has nominated as Ambassador to the Republic of Mali, presently the Ambassador to the Republic of Rwanda, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of counsellor; again, a very distinguished career in our diplomatic service.

Next is Robert Gribbon, who has been nominated by the President as Ambassador to the Republic of Rwanda. His present position is Ambassador to the Central African Republic, another career member of the Senior Foreign

Service, with the class of counsellor; a very distinguished career, formerly a Peace Corps volunteer in Kenya.

Finally, Gerald Wesley Scott, who has been nominated by the President as the Ambassador to the Republic of the Gambia. He is presently the Deputy Chief of Mission in Zaire and in the American Embassy in Kinshasa, Zaire, another career member of the Senior Foreign Service with the class of counsellor.

Mr. President, I have gone through this list and given a little information about each of these individuals just to make the point that this is not some kind of political effort on my part or on the President's part or anybody to get these people in these new positions.

These people have devoted their careers, their entire professional lives, to serving this country in often very difficult circumstances. They have been chosen by the President to serve in these important positions, and we owe it to them as well as to those people we represent in our home States to get on with approving their nominations so that they can continue to represent this country in those important positions.

That is the list of ambassadors that are presently being held up in the Foreign Relations Committee. I hope very much that we will be able to get an agreement here today, or very soon, to have all of those nominees reported to the Senate floor and have a vote on those nominees as well as on START II before we adjourn this session of the Congress. I think that would be a very major accomplishment and something that would allow us to feel we had done our duty under the Constitution, which I think is certainly what all of us are intending to do. So with that, Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The absence of a quorum has been suggested. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THOMAS. I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THOMAS. Thank you, Mr. President.

UNITED STATES TROOPS IN BOSNIA

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I rise to talk about an issue that all of us are concerned about and all of us are thinking about, and that is the President's policy to put United States troops on the ground in Bosnia.

First, let me make it clear that I am opposed to that idea. I had an opportunity about 5 weeks ago to go to Sarajevo along with some other of my associates here. We went to Stuttgart in