

The veterans were making the swift boats' last run, a 90-mile journey up the Potomac from the Naval Surface Warfare Center in Dahlgren, Va., to the Washington Navy Yard, where the boats are to be formally retired, closing a chapter in US naval history.

And green still spelled danger. "We were surrounded most of the time on the rivers by great, green beauty," Kerry recalled over the roar of engines and crushing waves. "There were lush greens and sampans and junks and water buffalos and beautiful Vietnamese children."

Then the green turned to fire and smoke, and "there were moments of utter terror where all hell broke loose," and Kerry, who earned the Silver Star, Bronze Star and three Purple Hearts as a 25-year-old commander of a swift boat, PCF-44.

The swift boats, modeled after the all-metal crafts used to ferry crews to offshore drilling rigs in the Gulf of Mexico, were dispatched to Vietnam because they were best suited to navigate the region's shallow and narrow waterways, the control of which US commanders considered vital.

But the boats became prime targets for the Viet Cong, who destroyed three of the 125 craft the Navy commissioned. Three others were lost in heavy weather off the coast of Vietnam. And one, PCF-14, sank after accidentally being attacked by the US Air Force.

For Kerry, action never seemed far away. "He was the type who if no other crew would take the job, he would take it," said Whitlow, a former gunner from Huntsville, Ark., who made his career in the Navy.

But his crew trusted him, said Tom Belodeau, an electrician from Lowell, who manned an M-60 machine gun on the bow of Kerry's boat. "He understood that his crew and his boat could get along without him, but that he couldn't get along without them," said Belodeau. "We all respected each other."

Kerry, clad yesterday in a brown leather jacket adorned with a "Tonkin Gulf Yacht Club" patch, reminisced with Whitlow and Belodeau on their four-hour journey up the Potomac, a reunion they said they never expected to occur.

Kerry joked about the time a Vietnamese woman nearly gave birth in Whitlow's arms as their boat sped to a medical unit. And he reminded Belodeau of the day a water mine exploded under the boat, catapulting their dog, VC, from the deck of their boat onto a nearby swift boat.

Kerry cited luck yesterday for much of his success in Vietnam. As he steered the swift boat toward the Washington Navy Yard and a clutch of dignitaries, he noted how well-preserved the craft was in contrast to his former boat.

"By the time I left" Vietnam, Kerry said, "there were 180 holes in my boat."

"To be honest," Belodeau said, "it looked like Swiss cheese."

Mr. MCCAIN. In closing, Mr. President, had Senator KERRY's modesty allowed me to, I would have liked to also include in the RECORD his citations for conspicuous bravery and heroic achievement, virtues which Senator KERRY repeatedly demonstrated in service to his country's cause, in the company of heroes, aboard as durable and dependable a vessel as ever flew the colors of the United States.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I would like to associate myself with the remarks of the distinguished Senator from Arizona as it relates to our distinguished colleague from Massachusetts. I happened to have been in the Depart-

ment of Navy during that period and am well aware of his distinguished record.

WEST VIRGINIA BIRTHDAY

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I am pleased and honored to wish the great State of West Virginia, and my fellow Mountaineers, a happy birthday. On this 20th of June we celebrate not only the courage our ancestors possessed in order to separate from Virginia, a powerful mother State, but also the heritage and sense of independence they left behind.

The State of West Virginia has always represented a place of great uniqueness. Our colors are blue and gold. Blue characterizes our bold ability to stand up for the freedom and the equal opportunities that we all deserve. Gold is the dignity of Mountaineers that shines throughout the world. The pride that the people of West Virginia have in their surrounding environment is one that can be found nowhere else. West Virginia's mountainous terrain offers attractions annually. The white water rafting and golf courses are considered among the finest anywhere. Plus, the 33 State parks include abundant wildlife. Tourists have rave remarks about our historic Blennerhassett Island, Harpers Ferry, and the Greenbrier Hotel.

Loyalty is a splendid quality of all the people in this magnificent State. Mountaineers have always supported the education and athletics of their colleges and universities. Through continuous hard work the men and women of West Virginia have attracted numerous industries to the area. Their strong work ethic has helped West Virginia's manufacturing sector to prosper. However, the pride and loyalty of our people extends out from our own boundaries. The people of West Virginia know the importance of freedom; therefore, many have dedicated their lives to serving our Nation.

Mr. President, the people of West Virginia share a special bond. Therefore, on this day let us all join together in recognizing and celebrating a very special birthday. Happy Birthday West Virginia.

IS CONGRESS IRRESPONSIBLE? THE VOTERS HAVE SAID YES.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, the impression simply will not go away: The \$4.8 trillion Federal debt is a grotesque parallel to the energizer bunny we see, and see, and see on television. The Federal debt keeps going and going and going—up, of course, and always to the added misery of the American taxpayers.

So many politicians talk a good game—when, that is, they go home to talk—and "talk" is the operative word—about bringing Federal deficits and the Federal debt under control.

But, sad to say, so many of these very same politicians have regularly

voted for one bloated spending bill after another during the 103d Congress and before. Come to think about it, this may have been a primary factor in the new configuration of U.S. Senators as a result of last November's elections.

In any event, Mr. President, as of yesterday, Monday, June 19, at the close of business, the total Federal debt stood—down to the penny—at exactly \$4,892,922,141,296.33 or \$18,573.62 per man, woman, child on a per capita basis. Res ipsa loquitur.

Mr. GRASSLEY addressed the Chair. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

CREDIBILITY GAP IN THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, last week, the President announced he would join Republicans in seeking to balance the budget. I, along with many of my Republican colleagues, welcomed the President's decision. We particularly welcomed the President's recognition that the growth of Medicare must be slowed down if we are going to keep that important program solvent.

Unfortunately, though, when you look at the President's entire budget—and it was looked at by the Congressional Budget Office, and this is a non-partisan scorekeeper—after reviewing the President's new proposal, it found that it would not balance the budget. In fact, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that President Clinton's new budget proposals would maintain deficits of approximately \$200 billion per year.

The deficit then under CBO's projections for the year 2005, which is at the end of the 10-year period of time the President wants to balance the budget, would still be \$209 billion deficits. And, of course, that is the year in which the President claimed his proposal would achieve balance.

The administration is trying in vain to paper over these huge deficits. The President claims that the failure of his new budget to achieve balance is due, in his words, to just some slight differences in estimating between the CBO and the administration's Office of Budget. Of course, we all know that this claim is disingenuous.

My colleagues need no further reminder than the President committing himself to using CBO estimates earlier in his administration to ensure that his proposal would be credible, and I would like to quote from the February 17, 1993, speech of the President. This was in a speech before Congress:

Let's at least argue about the same set of numbers so the American people will think that we're shooting straight with them.

The President could not have said it any better. So the President stated this in advocating the use of Congressional Budget Office estimates instead of any other estimates, including his own Office of Budget.

Now, of course, the President has decided to back away from the pledge of

using the nonpartisan CBO to provide estimates. He wants instead to use the White House's own numbers. Could it be because those numbers are more politically convenient? Of course, the answer is yes.

The President is using OMB estimates because he does not want to make the tough decisions and the tough tradeoffs. In addition, the President's proposal provides no detail and no policy assumptions—there is then no there, there. In sum, instead of lowering the deficit, the administration lowers the deficit estimate.

As former CBO Director Dr. Reischauer said the other day, and this is a direct quote: "He"—meaning the President—"lowered the bar and then gracefully jumped over it."

To the point, the President uses rosy scenarios. By embracing Ms. Rosy Scenario, the President undermines both his leadership and his credibility. I do not feel that I am carping on this issue, Mr. President, because I have walked the walk. I have broken ranks with Republican administrations in both the Reagan and Bush years because they proposed rosy scenarios and magic asterisks to seemingly lower the deficit. Rosy scenarios were wrong then and they are wrong now.

The President's intentions in joining the quest for a balanced budget are known, but his credibility is damaged by his new budget hocus-pocus. He has not enhanced his relevance in the process merely by offering what he says is a balanced budget. What he proposed must actually be a balanced budget to have credibility. Only at that point then will the President's efforts to balance the budget be real and will his part be relevant.

Again, I do not dismiss out of hand the President's efforts. His new budget at least indicates the President's good-faith intentions. In that regard, it is a good first step and a recognition that we must balance the budget. But if the administration wants to remain relevant, it must revisit its budget proposal and take the next very important step and make the additional cuts necessary to achieve balance, even by the year 2005, at the end of his 10 years, compared to the Republicans' 7 years.

In short, I propose the administration go back to the drawing board. Such actions would make the administration's budget truly credible with the American people to whom he promised a balanced budget proposal. The President must amend his proposal if he wants to fulfill his role as a leader on fiscal matters.

Mr. President, in closing, I would like to highlight just one part of the administration's budget which I believe the President needs to seriously reconsider, and that is the funding for defense. I was astounded to find that the President's proposal for outlays for defense is higher than that agreed to in the Senate budget resolution drafted by Senator DOMENICI.

The administration proposes to spend approximately \$20 billion more on de-

fense than contained in the Senate's budget resolution for fiscal year 1996 through the year 2002. And that resolution contained the original Clinton defense numbers. Incredibly, the administration's proposed defense spending is even higher than that contained in the House budget resolution. In the year 2002, the administration proposes to spend—can you believe this?—\$2 billion more on defense than that very high figure proposed in the House budget resolution.

Now, I am at a loss to understand why the President believes it is necessary to increase defense spending by billions. What can the justification possibly be? The Soviet military threat has evaporated. DOD managers cannot even account for the taxpayers' money they already have and have already spent. Any extra money would largely go toward buying hidden costs—in other words, paying for cost overruns, not for more weapons or equipment.

At the same time, the President proposes to give more money to the generals, he is asking working families, family farms, and the elderly to tighten their belts.

I was also astonished that in the out-years—years 9 and 10 of his budget—the administration continues to ratchet up defense spending. That is so far down the road that it is not even a credible proposal. So what is the rationale?

Finally, revisiting the President's proposal to increase defense spending would be a good place to start—I think it is a good place to start—as the administration looks for additional cuts in spending for its new budget proposal—cuts that must be provided if the administration is to maintain credibility as we work to achieve a balanced budget.

We Republicans thank him for his proposed balanced budget, but we want him to use real numbers. We want it to be balanced in the year 2005, and we do not want to have a \$9 billion deficit that is presently under the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office's calculations, as they have reviewed and critiqued his proposal.

I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNER). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

REPORT OF THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE GOVERNMENT OF LATVIA CONCERNING FISHERIES—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 56

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United

States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred jointly to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Foreign Relations, pursuant to Public Law 94-265:

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), I transmit herewith an Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Latvia Extending the Agreement of April 8, 1993, Concerning Fisheries Off the Coasts of the United States. The Agreement, which was effected by an exchange of notes at Riga on March 28, 1995, and April 4, 1995, extends the 1993 Agreement to December 31, 1997.

In light of the importance of our fisheries relationship with the Republic of Latvia, I urge that the Congress give favorable consideration to this Agreement at an early date.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, June 20, 1995.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:50 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Goetz, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1070. An act to designate the reservoir created by Trinity Dam in the Central Valley project, California, as "Trinity Lake".

At 2:16 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hays, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1530. An act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 1996 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 1996, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and second times, by unanimous consent and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1070. An act to designate the reservoir created by Trinity Dam in the Central Valley project, California, as "Trinity Lake"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; and

H.R. 1530. An act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 1996 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 1996, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following resolution was read and placed on the calendar:

S. Res. 97. Resolution expressing the sense of the Senate with respect to peace and stability in the South China Sea.