

TRIBUTE TO FRED PANG

Mr. GLENN. Mr. President, a man who worked with me very closely on the Armed Services Committee, Fred Pang, a man who rose to become the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management Policy, will retire from almost 40 years of service to our Government, on November 16.

During these 40 years he has always kept one principle paramount in his service—that principle has been the welfare of the troops. Over his entire period of service, and especially during the past 3 years, he has constantly worked to improve the quality of life for our men and women in uniform and their families.

Mr. Pang's long and productive association with the military of the United States dates back to his earliest days. Growing up in Hawaii, his father was a shipyard worker at Pearl Harbor and a survivor of the Japanese attack on December 7, 1941. Perhaps growing up in Hawaii during World War II helped shape Mr. Pang's propensity for public service, his fervent patriotism, and his penchant to participate in the defense of our Nation. In high school, Mr. Pang was a member of the Army Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps program at McKinley High School. Next, he joined the Naval Reserves, and following boot camp in San Diego, he served aboard two destroyers. While pursuing his bachelor's degree at the University of Hawaii, he enrolled in the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps program, and upon graduation, he was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force. Thus, began his long and illustrious active affiliation with the Department of Defense.

His 27-year Air Force career included a variety of manpower and personnel assignments, including a tour in Vietnam in 1968-69. Before retiring as a colonel in 1986, he was the Director of Officer and Enlisted Personnel Management and the Director of Compensation in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management and Personnel—two of the most important and demanding personnel jobs in the entire Department of Defense for an active duty officer. During his stint in these jobs, he worked on many critically important projects with long-term implications for the professional personnel management of uniformed personnel. Most noteworthy was the research and analysis he did in support of the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act [DOPMA] of 1981. While this act was obviously the result of much hard work by many people and was, in the final analysis, a work of the Congress, the work done by Mr. Pang in the Department of Defense contributed immeasurably to its success. The fact that DOPMA has remained in tact for over 16 years as the governing law for all Department of Defense officer personnel stands in tribute to the work done by then-Colonel Pang and all others who contributed to its development.

Upon his retirement from the Air Force, and after a very short, 6 months, time in the private sector, Mr. Pang again answered the call of his country and went to work as a professional staff member on the Senate Armed Services Committee [SASC]. As the majority staffer on the Personnel Subcommittee of the SASC, Mr. Pang was recognized as one of the leading experts and most influential people in the entire Government when it came to matters relating to the management of U.S. military personnel. Although his accomplishments on the SASC are far too numerous to list here, there is one facet of his service with the committee, which deserves mention. Following the end of the cold war, the Department of Defense was faced with the unprecedented task of drawing down an All-Volunteer military. Having lived through the post-Vietnam war drawdown, which was something less than successful, Mr. Pang was determined that we would not return to hollow military of the mid- to late-1970's. Working tirelessly, he developed a package of downsizing incentives including the voluntary separation incentive [VSI], special separation benefit [SSB], and temporary early retirement authority [TERA]. These programs have proven themselves to be extraordinarily effective in helping reshape our military as it was reduced by some 33 percent. The results speak for themselves. Today, we have a military that is of higher quality in terms of education and aptitude scores than ever before in history. The force was drawdown in a well-balanced manner so that today our service men and women are more experienced and capable than ever before. Additionally, when the drawdown began, many feared that minorities and women would be disproportionately affected. So good were the tools provided by Congress, developed mostly by Mr. Pang and so skillful was the execution of the drawdown that the military force of today is more richly diverse than ever before.

Working with his committee chairman, Senator Sam Nunn of Georgia, Mr. Pang recognized that the true peace dividend coming out of the cold war was the incredible number of high quality men and women coming out of the military and returning to civilian life. He conceived and developed an innovative and effective package of transition benefit programs that have proved to be successful beyond anyone's wildest dreams. Literally millions of service men and women have separated from the military since the drawdown began. Transition counseling packages written into law along with brilliant and innovative programs such as Troops to Teachers and Troops to Cops have ensured that not only have our recent veterans found meaningful and rewarding employment, but that their skills, developed in the military, are now being utilized to the fullest in the civilian sector. A great deal of an-

ecdotal evidence exists that these transition programs have worked exceedingly well. However, as overall evidence of the effectiveness of the transition programs developed by Mr. Pang, notwithstanding the huge number of people separating from the military during the downsizing, the amount of money, as a percent of the budget, that the Department of Defense has paid out in unemployment compensation has not increased at all. People are finding jobs in the private sector, and they are finding good jobs. Through job fairs and transition bulletin boards, private sector employers have acquired new employees who have a great work ethic, who understand the concept of mission, and who are drug free. And society has acquired former service members who are outstanding role models for the youth of America. Much of the credit for this truly American success story has got to go to Mr. Fred Pang.

During his tenure as Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs and as Assistant Secretary of Defense, Force Management Policy, Mr. Pang has continued and focused his leadership in the area of military and civilian personnel management and equal opportunity. Hard to put into words, but clearly evident from the accomplishments of the organizations that he has so skillfully led over the past 4 years, is the "can do", positive attitude that he inspires as a leader. During his tenure as Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, he dealt with some of the thorniest issues facing the Navy in many years such as the Tailhook scandal and the U.S. Naval Academy cheating scandal. Mr. Pang's integrity and commonsense approach to problemsolving did much to put the Navy on the correct course in dealing with these very difficult issues. As the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Force Management Policy, he completely revised and made right the Department of Defense Directive on officer promotion and nomination procedures. In the aftermath of Tailhook and other highly publicized officer promotion and nomination problems, the new directive, written under Mr. Pang's leadership, has not only put the processing of these critical actions back on an efficient and timely track, but has restored the faith and confidence of the Senate Armed Services Committee and of the American public in the officer promotion and nomination process. One of the major efforts of former Secretary of Defense William Perry was improving the quality of life of service and family members. He placed Mr. Pang in charge of this effort and appointed him as the chairman of the Department of Defense Executive Committee on Quality of Life. Under Dr. Perry's guidance and Mr. Pang's leadership, the Quality of Life Executive Committee has made major accomplishments in improving the quality of life of our service and family members, and, for the first time, we have established a series of measurements and

standards for all quality of life services. Because of these efforts, the lives of service and family members worldwide have been improved and enriched.

Mr. Pang has led the Force Management Policy organization to new heights of efficiency and accomplishment across the spectrum of civilian and military personnel management; personnel support, families and education; equal opportunity; morale welfare and recreation and resale activities; and women in the military. He is leaving a legacy of service to the Department of Defense and our Nation, and most importantly, to our men and women serving in uniform, of dedicated service and lasting contributions.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended until 12:30 under the same terms as previously agreed to.

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

ADOPTION AND SAFE FAMILIES ACT OF 1997

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I would like to express my strong support for legislation that will be considered by the Senate and has been considered by the House this morning. This legislation is the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997. This bill, which is a compromise version of legislation that I introduced originally now has as supporters and sponsors: Senator ROCKEFELLER, Senator CRAIG, Senator BOND, Senator DEWINE, Senator COATS, Senator JEFFORDS, Senator LANDRIEU, Senator LEVIN, Senator KERREY, Senator DORGAN, Senator MOYNIHAN, Senator MOSELEY-BRAUN, and Senator JOHNSON. Mr. President, this legislation will make some critical changes to the child welfare system—changes that will vastly improve the lives of hundreds of thousands of children currently in foster care and waiting for adoptive homes. I am very hopeful that the President, who has indicated his support for this legislation, will sign this measure promptly.

Mr. President, just yesterday, there was yet another story in the newspapers about a young girl, 9 years old, who was found dead from severe abuse in her sister's Bronx apartment. The tragic story of young Sabrina Green's short life is harrowing, and it is all too reminiscent of the cases we read and hear about, unfortunately, every single day. Each time I read about a case like

Sabrina Green's, I feel outrage and frustration with a system that cannot take care of the most vulnerable members of our society. Now, Mr. President, we cannot bring Sabrina Green back to life, nor can we bring back any of the hundreds of children who have died under similar circumstances; but we can take action to prevent such deaths in the future, and that is what we are doing today.

The bill that will come over to us shortly, Mr. President, will put the safety and health of the child first. That is a significant change in the law. Under this legislation, the safety and health of the child will come first. We will not continue the current system of always putting the needs and rights of the biological parents first. While we still believe that family reunification is a worthy goal, it's time we recognize that some families simply cannot and should not be kept together. Children who have suffered severe abuse or whose parents have committed violent crimes should be moved out of those homes rapidly and into adoptive homes. Our bill does that. Children who are in foster care for over 15 months deserve to have a decision made about their future. Our legislation does both of those things.

It is also time we put a stop to children lingering in foster care for years. There are currently half a million children in this country—500,000 children in the United States of America—who have been removed from their abusive or neglectful parents and are living in foster care. In my State, there are 1,500 of these children in foster care. Nationally, each of these children in foster care will remain so for an average of 3 years before a decision is made about their future, and many of them will wait much longer. The average is 3 years. Some have stayed for years and years in foster care. Today, we are sending those half a million children a message of hope. Under this legislation, their time in foster care will be shortened. States will be required to make a permanent plan for these children after a year, and if a child has been in foster care for more than 15 months—1 year and 3 months—the State will be required to take the first steps toward terminating parental rights and finding an adoptive home.

Terminating parental rights is the critical first step in moving children into permanent placements, but it is not enough. We also must promote adoption of these children, and our bill does that. Our bill removes geographic barriers to adoption. There are no limitations under this bill about children in one State having to be adopted in that State. We remove these geographic barriers to adoption and require States to document efforts to move children into safe adoptive homes. We also provide financial bonuses to States that increase their adoption rights. There is money here for States that increase the rate of adoption in their States.

There are legal and procedural barriers to adoption, and there are also financial barriers. Lack of medical coverage is one such barrier to families who want to adopt special needs children. What is a special needs child? It is a child who has medical problems or physical problems, or a child of such an age, maybe 15 or 16, in a foster home. Adoptive parents are very reluctant to take on a child of that age. Many of these children have significant physical and mental health problems due to years of abuse and neglect and foster care. Many of these children have been shuttled from foster parent to foster parent. So the adoptive parents are taking a huge financial risk in adopting these children if the parents are not guaranteed that there will be health insurance for these special needs children. Our bill ensures that special needs children who are going to be adopted will have medical coverage. We also ensure that children whose adoptive parents die or whose adoptions disrupt or terminate for some reason, they will continue to receive Federal subsidies when they are adopted by new parents.

Mr. President, I am very proud of this legislation. The Senate and House sponsors have worked tirelessly for many months to come to an agreement. Our shared commitment to improving the lives of these children brought us together. In closing, I want to especially thank my good friend, Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER, who has spent years devoting his time and attention to these children. I also thank Senator CRAIG, who brought his own personal experiences and dedication to this effort, and Senator DEWINE, who brought so much expertise and professional experience to this initiative. I also want to thank the other members of the coalition, those Senators that I mentioned earlier, and I will repeat their names—Senator BOND, Senator COATS, Senator JEFFORDS, Senator LANDRIEU, Senator LEVIN, Senator KERREY, Senator DORGAN, Senator MOYNIHAN, Senator MOSELEY-BRAUN, and Senator JOHNSON.

I also want to congratulate the House sponsors who worked so hard on this—Congressman CAMP and Congresswoman KENNELLY.

I thank our staffs for the extraordinary efforts they devoted to achieving passage of this legislation. Particularly, I salute Laurie Rubiner, of my staff, and Barbara Pryor, of Senator ROCKEFELLER's staff. All of these individuals that are mentioned, and others, have been so helpful in achieving passage of this legislation, which I think has just now passed the House and will be coming here. We look for rapid action here.

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