

joint military commission. This joint military commission is committed to doing the job of actually enforcing the peace and making sure the parties withdraw from the other countries.

In order to get to phase 2 of this operation that is now contemplated, a number of things had to happen. The joint military commission had to be created, and an initial 90 observers from the U.N. had to be deployed. That was done. But before the next phase goes forward—the one that involves some 5,500 U.N. troops and personnel—a number of other things had to happen as well.

There had to be a functioning cease-fire. Although it has not worked at all times—and at the moment is in a little bit of trouble because of the conflict between Uganda and Rwanda—on the whole, it has succeeded in the last month. Second, it was essential that all these parties come together and pick one person as a facilitator of the process of national dialogue. After a number of efforts, they did so, by appointing President Masire, the former President of Botswana.

They had to create an operational arrangement of the U.N. MONUC group and the JMC to coordinate, and they did it. They had to have a signed commitment by the parties of the conflict guaranteeing security and freedom of movement and access for the U.N. team. And they did it.

So now we come to the point of where additional steps, hopefully, can be taken. We are now looking at getting into the second phase of this peace operation, including developing plans to disengage and withdraw the troops from the various countries and parties that have signed this agreement, and the conducting of an inter-Congolese dialog that could lead to a genuine democratic country, and to develop these plans with the JMC.

If that is accomplished, and only if these steps are accomplished, would we go forward to the final steps, phase 3, which involves verifying the withdrawal of foreign forces, normalizing border security, and, yes, finally, again, after all these years, the conducting of a democratic election.

So what I am seeing here, although it is certainly not perfect, is a measured step-by-step approach—not an all-or-nothing approach—but a step-by-step approach, led by the African countries. That is something I think we should encourage and even admire because it is so very difficult to do in this situation.

For me, there is a sufficient record to say, we must try to do something—not send U.S. troops, not send a huge United Nations force of 30,000 or 40,000 people, as some have wondered about.

It may not work, and we may ultimately have to say no to doing more, as tragic as failure would be—but based on the facts that I have witnessed and learned about, I think we must try.

We must not wash our hands of this or just say that it would be an example

of throwing money in the Congo to make ourselves feel better. I believe we should support financially—and in other ways—the efforts for peace in the Congo. We must try.

Again, why must we try? I think because this is a test—it is a very tough test—but it is a test of whether the United States really does have a double standard vis-a-vis Africa. To abandon the Congo without an effort would be a strong signal that we intend to abandon all of Africa.

We must try, even though we have tried in other situations with great difficulty—such as Kosovo and Bosnia and Haiti. Let me again suggest I think we went too headlong into those situations. I do not think we were careful to take the measured steps that are being done in this case. And that led to our complete, abject failure to act with regard to Rwanda. As I have said, even with regard to Somalia, mistakes were made. But I think that is because it was, again, an example of an all-or-nothing approach, with no clear mission, and no exit strategy.

I think this is different. I think this has the potential to work, although it is difficult, because it is measured and it is an African-dominated approach.

I think we have to try because at this time in human history the crimes against Africa have to be halted. I do not have time to talk about the slave trade, the gap between the rich and the poor, the use of these countries as a playing field for colonial powers during the cold war. But we cannot extol this new global economy and trade around the world and have these African nations treated forever as hopeless and fundamentally different.

We must try, in fact, because the lofty rhetoric of U.S.-Africa trade becomes something of a cruel hoax on the people of Africa if we are not going to confront the brutality, the chaos, and even the genocide in the very nations with whom we claim we want to have improved trade.

We must try because I think it truly hurts America in the world's eyes, at a critical time in our role as a world leader, if we are perceived as being unwilling to help African nations when they desperately need that help.

Finally, to return to my initial theme—because each situation in Africa is different, and yet interrelated—if we help move this process forward, this Lusaka agreement, involving cooperation between the U.N. and the joint military commission, it cannot only give Congo what it has always deserved and never had—real peace, self-determination and hope—but it can help its neighbors.

Rwanda is greatly destabilized and threatened because of this conflict in the Congo. Uganda has a very problematic border with the Congo, and other countries, and is now in conflict with Rwanda because they are in the Congo together. That would help alleviate that situation. Burundi has enormous problems of its own, which President

Mandela is trying to help with. None of these countries should be involved in the Congo conflict. They have problems of their own.

Angola, which I have described as one of the most horrifying situations in Africa, should not be having troops up in this area for whatever reason, perhaps because of their conflict within their own country. We can cause this to be a more localized problem that perhaps we could deal with.

Namibia certainly should not have troops up in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, nor should the other countries, when all it does is drain their resources and causes problems over their borders.

And, of course, Zimbabwe. Talk about any country in the world that should not be using its resources right now to fight a war in the Congo, when it has such desperate economic and political problems at this time. Even South Africa suffers in its tremendous struggle to become one of the great nations of the world as long as this Congo conflict continues.

Let us be realistic, but let us also be open to the possibility of trying in the Congo. Let us not have a double standard where we act with great rhetoric and words of “never again” in so many places in the world, but when it comes to Africa, we seem to be unable to act.

Mr. President, I appreciate the opportunity to speak.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to the consideration of S. 2521, which the clerk will report by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2521) making appropriations for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes.

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I am pleased to bring before the Senate the military construction appropriations bill and report for fiscal year 2001. This bill reflects the bipartisan approach that the ranking member, Senator MURRAY of Washington, and I have tried to maintain regarding military construction on this subcommittee. It has been a pleasure to work with Senator MURRAY and her staff. They have been very cooperative throughout this

whole process. That is very important because we take our jobs here very seriously and this appropriations bill very seriously.

This bill was reported out of the full Appropriations Committee on May 9. The bill recommended by the Committee on Appropriations is for \$8,634,000,000. The bill is \$600 million over the budget request and approximately \$292 million over last year's enacted level. However, there are some considerations we must make. More importantly, the legislation reflects a reduction of \$1.2 billion from just 4 years ago—a decrease of almost 12 percent.

We sought to recommend to the Senate a balanced bill, and we believe it addresses the key military construction requirements for readiness, for family housing, barracks, quality of life, and the Guard and Reserve components.

As my colleagues well know, we take into strong consideration the Guard and Reserve components because we have seen a shift in our force structure. Our force structure has shifted from Regular Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines to Reserve and Guard components. When we started to do that, we found that around this country our infrastructure was lacking for training of these personnel.

This bill honors a commitment we have to our armed forces. It helps ensure that housing and infrastructure needs of the military are given proper recognition.

Also, I am pleased to report to the Senate that the bill is within the committee's 302(b) budget allocation for both budget authority and outlays.

This bill has some points I want to mention. It includes \$3.5 billion to provide better and more modern family housing for our service personnel and their families.

On another quality-of-life measure, we have added substantially to the budget request for barracks construction projects. The bill provides \$712 million for 43 projects throughout the United States and overseas. This funding will provide single service members a more favorable living environment wherever they are stationed.

The committee also provides \$101 million for 14 environmental compliance projects.

We also address the shortfalls that continue to plague our Reserve components.

As our active force grows smaller, we are more dependent than ever on our Guard and Reserve for the maintenance of our national security. I continue to be greatly alarmed that the Department of Defense takes no responsibility for ensuring that our Reserve components have adequate facilities.

For the members of the Guard and Reserve, quality of life, too, is very important. It is all about buildings and it is all about facilities from which they work and perform their mission.

Their lack of regard for the total force concept very much concerns me

and many of my colleagues. In Montana, we have the greatest example of a unified Red Horse Division at Malmstrom Air Force Base. It is made up of Regular Air Force and Reserves and is working very well.

This comes at a time when our country is so heavily dependent on the Guard and Reserve to maintain our presence around the world. For example, the President's budget request was for only \$222 million for all of the Reserve components and the National Guard. That was just not enough.

Recognizing this chronic shortfall, we have again lent support by adding \$359 million to these accounts.

In each case, the funds will help satisfy the essential mission; quality of life, and, of course, our readiness requirements.

We fully fund the budget request for the base realignment and closure account by funding \$1.17 billion to continue the ongoing BRAC process and consummate the remaining closures and realignments.

As you know, in this line particularly, it has been very troubling to this committee that environmental cleanup has really soaked up a lot of our funding that should have been used for quality of life.

We will work very closely with the Senate Armed Services Committee as we put together a conference package for military construction.

This bill also includes year 2000 supplemental funding for the Department of Defense in peacekeeping operations in Kosovo and other requirements.

The chairman of the full Appropriations Committee, Senator STEVENS, will speak to these issues as we move along.

I urge the Members of the Senate to support this bill and to move it forward as quickly and as expeditiously as we possibly can.

Now I yield to my good friend, the distinguished Senator from Washington, Mrs. MURRAY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I am pleased to be on the floor today to offer the fiscal year 2001 military construction appropriations bill. I thank Senator BURNS, the chairman of our committee, and his staff, for being so good in a great bipartisan manner, in being able to work this bill through again this year. I publicly thank him for his work with me in a really solid manner. I appreciate the way he has done that.

Before I address this bill, I want to address some comments that were made about me on this floor by the majority leader just a short time ago.

While I was taking part in a hearing of the Senate Commerce Committee as part of my work to improve pipeline safety in this country, I understand the majority leader suggested that my schedule was a reason why a debate on commonsense gun control was not going to take place today.

Given the work that I have done over the years to protect young people from

gun violence, and my strong support of this weekend's Million Mom March, I was rather surprised by that suggestion. I assure my colleagues that this debate is too important to be delayed any longer.

While I support the majority leader's concern about a family obligation I have; namely, my son is going to be married, there is no excuse for not debating this legislation—especially the absence of any one Member.

If this had been a concern of the majority leader, perhaps he could have spoken to me personally before incorrectly citing me as the reason why the Senate would not be debating gun violence today.

I would like to remind the majority leader that, on November 4, I came to the floor, in the wake of a fatal shooting in my home State, and urged the Members of the Senate to work with me on commonsense solutions to gun violence. Since that time, it has been the congressional majority that has prevented this much needed debate from taking place, and it is the congressional majority today that, again, refuses to address this vital issue.

I would like to remind my colleagues that, on average, 12 children die every day from gunfire. We cannot wait any longer.

Mr. President, I will now turn to the issue before us.

I again am pleased to be here with my chairman, Senator BURNS, in recommending the fiscal year 2001 military construction appropriations bill to the Senate for its approval.

This is an unusual bill this year because it contains emergency supplemental funding for a number of defense items not related to military construction, including U.S. participation in the Kosovo peacekeeping operation and in the Colombia counternarcotics initiative.

I will defer to my ranking member on the full committee, Senator BYRD, and others, to address the items in the supplemental portion of this bill, and I will confine my remarks to the military construction portion of the bill.

This bill provides a total of \$8.634 billion in new spending authority for military construction for fiscal year 2001.

This level of funding exceeds the President's budget request for military construction by \$600 million, and provides nearly \$300 million above the amount appropriated for fiscal year 2000.

Nevertheless, as usual, this bill comes up short of what the services need to meet their infrastructure requirements.

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, I once again urge the administration to increase the budget for military construction.

This is a bricks-and-mortar bill.

There is nothing glamorous or "gee-whiz" about aircraft hangars or barracks or armories.

But this is an essential bill, and the projects that it funds are vital to our men and women in uniform.

As many of my colleagues have pointed out to me in the course of developing this bill, the President's budget barely scratches the surface or infrastructure needs.

The requests that Senator BURNS and I have received this year address compelling needs throughout the services, and I wish that we had the resources to fund more of them.

Senator BURNS and his staff deserve a great deal of credit for their dedicated and thoughtful approach in drafting this bill.

As always, they have worked very hard to produce a balanced, bipartisan product that takes into account both the concerns of the Senate and the needs of the military.

In particular, they have done a superb job of continuing to shine the spotlight on the quality of life projects that are so important to our men and women in uniform, and to their families.

At a time when military enlistment and retention are declining—and the services are unable to match the financial incentives of the private sector—quality of life issues are amplified in importance.

Quality of life issues do not diminish the importance of readiness projects, but we must not dismiss their role in recruiting and retaining our military personnel.

Within the budget constraints that we are all forced to operate this year, this bill attempts to meet the most urgent and timely military construction needs with very limited resources.

All of the major construction projects that we have funded have been authorized.

In addition, we have ensured adequate funding for family housing and barracks construction.

However, I remain concerned that the nation's overall investment in military infrastructure continues to lag, and I hope we will see a more robust effort in future budgets.

This is an extremely important bill for our nation and our military forces.

I again commend Senator BURNS, and I thank the staff of the Appropriations Committee, including Sid Ashworth, Christina Evans, and Sonia King, as well as Mark Borreson, a fellow on my staff, for their excellent work in producing the bill.

Mr. President, I look forward to completing action on this important piece of legislation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate go

into a period of morning business for the Senator from New Jersey to speak.

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

Under the previous order, the Senator from New Jersey is recognized for 30 minutes.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I am going to continue discussing the issue we were talking about earlier. In my earlier remarks, while talking about trade, we talked about the value of trade with the sub-Saharan nations, whose economic subjugation created all kinds of problems. We talked about the economic strangulation that presents so many problems and creates violence and corruption and lawlessness in some of these countries. We are hoping that this trade can suppress those differences and that violence.

I was making the point that we in this country have a problem of our own regarding gun violence, which is very detrimental to the harmonious functioning within our society. We have these huge differences between those who think that "guns unlimited" ought to be the rule. I had the opportunity to hear a brilliant author, Gary Wills, talk about why it is that people distrust Government. One of the issues he brings up—and I am paraphrasing some here—is that when people see that violence pervades our society, we have to have some sense of a regulation. He pointed out that if we didn't have regulations on our highways, highway safety programs, our system would be rendered useless because people would be afraid to go out on the highways because of the mayhem it would create.

I think it is a fairly simple thing to understand that if you were able to drive as fast as you wanted on either side of the road, we would be killing and maiming one another. I don't understand why it is that we can't have some sensible gun violence control in this country, some regulation. Why is this one part of our society so exempt from any kind of sensible regulation that says a person who wants to buy a gun ought to be qualified physically and emotionally to do so, and that if they want to buy a gun they ought not have any history of violent behavior?

I wrote legislation regarding spousal abuse. I said anybody convicted of a misdemeanor for spousal abuse ought not to be able to own a gun. I had terrific resistance in this place. I could not get it through, really. Finally, we got it through as a piece of legislation on a budget.

What has happened in 3½ years? Well, 33,000 people who are not qualified by virtue of violence against a spouse or their children—domestic abusers—have been prevented from getting guns, where maybe they pointed a gun at somebody and said, "If you don't listen to me, I will blow your brains out." I think it was a positive measure.

The Brady bill was fought tooth and nail before it was passed. The Brady bill gave Government time to check out these individuals who are applying for guns or gun ownership at such a prolific rate that we ought to have some measure of control. Well, after a long debate and a lot of suffering, had Jim Brady, who was shot while an attempt was made on the life of President Reagan, not wheeled himself around the Capitol, it never would have passed.

What was the effect of the Brady bill—the thing the gun lobby was so afraid of that would "impair freedom"? Baloney, as we say. Well, 500,000 people were prevented from getting guns, thank the Lord. What would have happened? Those 500,000 people who were not qualified either by virtue of personal characteristics, background, a tendency toward violence, or trouble, could have gotten guns. Thank goodness they were not able to get guns.

We wonder whether or not, with a Million Moms March imminent on Mother's Day, anybody thinks mothers are clamoring to leave their homes and march in protest because they have nothing better to do on Mother's Day. That is the most revered holiday, next to Christmas, that we have in our society. It is when people flock to see moms. I know my children want to see their mother. My grandchildren want to see their mother. A lot of them in my family will be out there marching because they are sick and tired of worrying about whether or not their children, when they go to school to learn, to sing, to play, to make friends, are going to get shot, are going to get assaulted, are going to get killed or wounded in such a way that they never recover. That doesn't only mean those who were hit with a bullet. It means friends who saw their classmates at Columbine lying down and trying to crawl out windows to get away from the madness, in fear for their lives.

What was the impact of that throughout the school? Did the wounding stop with those hit with a bullet? Or do those wounds go on forever? Some lost friends who were 16 and 17 years old—kids in the prime of life. Those wounds will last forever. So it is not only those who are involved in the fracas; it is everybody—all of us across the country.

Look at the physical cost: metal detectors, guards, cameras, rigid processes for transportation. It costs a fortune. Frankly, I think we should just put a lid on this proliferation of guns and stop the unlicensed gun dealers from selling guns and not asking any questions of the buyer—"buyers anonymous"—at gun shows across the country. If you want to buy guns, just put your money down, brother, and you can have all the guns you want and walk away. You could be one of the 10 most wanted criminals in the United States on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted list. Even if they recognize you, they have no obligation in the States that don't