

and would abrogate America's responsibility to match force structure to the strategy it prescribes.

The stability then-Major George C. Marshall spoke of requires force structure consistency within an acceptable range for the health of our armed services. These services are only as good and effective as those they can entice to serve. Recruitment and retention efforts are damaged when end-strength numbers vary widely. Why should a young person commit to serving if he or she knows they may lose their jobs when the government next cuts the size of the military? Keeping faith with those who serve means maintaining a stable military base.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the strategy I have articulated here requires significant forces, in some cases more than we have today. The United States requires an Army, an Army of forces to fight a major theater war, to deter a second such conflict, to undertake peacekeeping operations, and to take part in engagement operations. If you consider that we used the equivalent of some 10 ground force divisions in the Gulf War, it is hard to see how we could fight one major conventional war while taking on any other missions with our current force. This and the reality of high current OPTEMPO rates argue for additional forces.

At a minimum, we should secure an increase in the size of the active duty Army by 20,000 soldiers to an end strength of 500,000, while maintaining 10 active duty divisions. Just last month, Secretary White and General Shinseki testified before our committee that the Army could use 520,000 to meet the requirements of today's missions; 500,000 is the minimum force size needed to implement this strategy.

In addition, we should support Army transformation efforts. The Army has given careful thought as to how it must face future challenges; these efforts deserve administration and congressional support.

Our strategy will continue to put great demands on the Navy for presence, ensuring access to conflict areas, and to providing firepower to those fighting on the ground. In this service, a greater number of ships, along with a modest increase in end strength, is desperately needed.

□ 2230

The Navy currently has approximately 315 ships. Over time, given our current replacement shipbuilding rate, that figure would drop to 230. Such a decline is appalling for a global naval power with global requirements. The scope of our commitments argues for a 400-ship Navy. This should be our goal. At a minimum, however, we should build toward the Navy's articulated requirement of 360 ships. We must also devote resources to developing innovative ships capable of operating in the littoral—such as a Cebrowski-class of "streetfighters"—as a complement to our fleet of capital ships. Such new

platforms may well have great war-fighting value, provide presence on the cheap, and serve as a counterforce to others' anti-access capabilities.

The Air Force is currently well-sized for the present strategy and will continue to play a vital role across the spectrum of conflict. The Aerospace Expeditionary Force concept is essential for allowing the Air Force to deal effectively with the tempo of current operations.

While the Air Force does not require greater force structure, it will need additional capabilities. The Air Force will need to recapitalize its aging fleet. In addition, the distances involved in a strategy more oriented toward Asia must involve greater airlift and more long-range capabilities, like the B-2.

Finally, the Marine Corps is well suited to both contingency operations and major theater war in the 21st century. In addition, they are developing urban warfare capabilities highly relevant to future conflicts. While Marine force structure is appropriate to their missions, they require a modest increase in end-strength to allow fuller manning of existing units and a relief to some OPTEMPO and PERSTEMPO demands. We must ensure that the Marine Corps continues to be able to provide the swift, forward action required by future challenges.

Taken together, these changes result in a larger force. The administration is right to say that we currently have a mismatch between strategy and force structure, but the answer is not to explain away the requirements of our global role. The answer is to size a force appropriate to the roles we must play.

Some might argue that we can accomplish these missions with fewer forces if we accept larger risks. This is a fool's economy. We must give the services the tools they need to fight and win decisively within low to moderate levels of risk. We must also lower risks to readiness by ensuring adequate forces for rotations. Mitigating these risks by modestly increasing the size of the force is the best way to provide the stability in U.S. forces that then-Major George C. Marshall sought in 1923. Only then will we be prepared to meet any challenge that will confront us.

Budgetary concerns alone should not determine our national military strategy. However, we must acknowledge the difficulty of both modernizing our forces and ensuring they have the capabilities needed to fight on any 21st century battlefield, without cutting force structure. Alleviating these pressures will require effort on both sides. We in Congress must keep national strategy in mind when allocating defense resources. President Bush recently expressed his hope that "Congress' priority is a strong national defense." I can tell you that for many of us, Democrat and Republican, this is the case.

But for its part, the administration must make the priority of national defense as or more important than a tax

cut. The military truly requires and deserves a greater budgetary top-line and a larger percentage of discretionary spending. The Department must follow through on the management reforms that Secretary Rumsfeld and the service secretaries have rightly highlighted to achieve cost savings.

At the end of the day, my approach is nothing more than Harry Truman common sense. Implementing effective strategy requires inspired leadership by the President and Secretary of Defense. I say again, inspired leadership. I hope the current administration will provide it. Conversations about strategy tend to stay within policy elites. But at its most fundamental level, the impact of this strategy we make is felt by every member of the service. They must have confidence that their leaders will consistently fund defense at levels that allow them to do their jobs proudly and effectively. If we fail to do that, we undermine not only our strategy but all those Americans we should inspire to serve.

NATIONAL DEFENSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I want to start off by commending the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) for his very appropriate and very logical comments which I will follow up on in a few moments.

Before doing so, however, Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay my personal tribute to one of our colleagues who passed away over the break, the Honorable FLOYD SPENCE. I had known FLOYD SPENCE as many of our colleagues did in a very personal way over the past 15 years that I have served in the Congress. He was a leader on national security issues when I came to the Congress. He was one of those individuals that I looked up to for guidance and for early orientation to fully understand the role of the Congress in making sure that our military was being properly supported.

Congressman SPENCE, Chairman SPENCE, was one of those very unique individuals who had severe health problems, in fact had a major double lung transplant, and had gone through turmoil in his life from the health standpoint. I can remember the days when they wheeled him to the floor of the House in a wheelchair with a ventilator, yet he came back and rose to become the full chairman of the House Armed Services Committee and for 6 years he led this body in issues affecting our national security.

He was a quiet man, a gentleman, someone that never had a cross word for anyone, even those he disagreed with and was someone who would be a role model for someone aspiring to become a Member of this body. He had a

profound influence. During a time of difficulty in the 1990s when defense budgets were not what they should have been, it was Chairman FLOYD SPENCE who rose above the political fray and led this Congress in a very bipartisan way to increase defense spending by approximately \$43 billion over President Clinton's request for defense over a 6-year time period. If it had not been for Chairman SPENCE fighting tirelessly for our military, for the quality of life for our troops, if it had not been for Chairman SPENCE fighting for modernization and fighting for the basic dignity of our military, I do not know where we would be today, Mr. Speaker, because the summary I am going to give following this tribute to Chairman SPENCE will outline some very severe problems in our military.

Thank goodness Chairman SPENCE was here. Thank goodness he was fighting the battle. Thank goodness he was building bipartisan coalitions on behalf of the sons and daughters of America serving in uniform. He did a fantastic job in this body. He was someone who had many friends on both sides of the aisle and someone who will be terribly missed. I could not attend the funeral of Chairman SPENCE because I was in Huntsville, Alabama, giving a major speech to 800 people on missile defense.

It was only because of Chairman SPENCE's leadership that we have moved missile defense along as far as it has gone. As a tribute to him on that opening day of the conference, the entire group joined in a prayer together, a prayer of sympathy for the family of FLOYD, for his wife and his sons, and to let all of America know that FLOYD SPENCE has been a true champion, one of our real patriots.

It was just last April, Mr. Speaker, where I had the pleasure of recognizing Chairman FLOYD SPENCE at our annual national fire and emergency services dinner. We have two types of defenders that we support in America: Our international defenders, our military, and FLOYD SPENCE was definitely their champion. That night as we have for the past 14 years, we honored our domestic defenders.

Our domestic defenders are the men and women who serve in the 32,000 organized fire and EMS departments all across the country. We honored FLOYD SPENCE that night because 6 months prior, in last year's defense authorization bill, it was FLOYD SPENCE as chairman working with the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), who just left this Chamber, who allowed me to move forward legislation that created a grant program to provide matching funds for local fire and EMS departments so that they can better equip themselves to be America's domestic defenders. On that night, 2,000 leaders of the fire and emergency services from all over America gave FLOYD SPENCE a standing ovation for the work that he had done on behalf of our domestic defenders.

So FLOYD SPENCE's legacy is a legacy that all of us could look up to and hope

to achieve, one of supporting those people who wear the uniform, the uniform to protect America overseas, and the uniform to protect America at home. To FLOYD's family, his wife, his sons, we say thank you for giving us a tireless public servant whose legacy will live on forever, who did so much in such a short period of time and who will be so sorely missed in this body and in the minds and hearts of military leaders across this country and around the world where our troops are stationed. FLOYD SPENCE was a true American hero.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate that following this brief tribute to FLOYD SPENCE, that I highlight a trip that took place the last week of August by myself and several of our colleagues. We are going to go into more detail next week in a 2-hour special order where I will be joined by my ranking Democrat colleague the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ORTIZ), a good friend of mine, as he and I along with the other Members of our delegation go through in very great detail the findings of our trip around the country, a trip that I think was a first of its kind in the history of Congress, a trip that was designed to assess the status of our military's problems.

Mr. Speaker, most of the times when we in Congress take trips to military bases, they roll out the red carpet. They invite us to lunch with the base commander or the admiral. They sit us down and give us nice slide presentations, feed us well, give us a windshield tour of the facility and tell us how well everything is going. Those kinds of trips usually last an hour to an hour and a half. We wear suits and ties and the military personnel are all in their best garb and we see the best but we do not see the worst.

That is not what this trip was about, Mr. Speaker. As the chairman of the Readiness Committee, the committee that oversees the readiness of our troops, approximately one-third of our defense budget, my challenge to our staff and to the services over 5 weeks ago was to put together a trip that would for the first time allow our colleagues in Congress to see the real story of the status of our military.

I called the service reps in; and in my office 5 weeks ago, I outlined my vision for this trip. I said it was going to be a whirlwind trip that would go basically around the clock, have us engage directly with the troops, not pre-positioned people that would know we were coming with prestaged answers but, rather, a very candid and openhanded method of assessing the real problems that our military is encountering today.

We challenged each of the services to come up with bases that we could visit that would give us a real glimpse into problems that we know are there, problems of declining readiness, problems of the lack of ammunition, problems of the lack of ability of spare parts to keep our planes in the air, problems of

infrastructure, airfields that were not being maintained, buildings, housing, both barracks and multifamily units, problems with child care and schools and health care, so we would come back and be able to give to our colleagues in this body a full, detailed, accurate assessment as to whether or not we are living up to the requirement that is given to us as our first priority in the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, as I was sitting in my office, I heard some of my colleagues talk for an hour about the President's tax cuts and how they are going to wreak havoc in America. I heard them talk about the need for more money for education, more money for a prescription drug program, more money for domestic spending, more money for foreign aid, but I did not hear much debate about the need for more funding for our military.

I pulled out my copy of the Constitution, and the Declaration of Independence which is the governing authority for our power in this country, and I looked up article 1, section 8, which defines the role and powers of the Congress. Mr. Speaker, as I assess article 1, section 8 and I see the powers of the Congress, I do not see anything there talking about raising the money to fund education in America, even though I am a teacher by profession and support the role of helping improve our quality of education. But it is not in the Constitution.

□ 2245

I do not see any mention in article I, section 8, of the Constitution establishing a program of prescription drugs for our seniors, although I support the effort to provide prescription drug coverage for those seniors who cannot afford it. I do not see any provision in article I, section 8, covering many of the programs that we fund in this institution. But, Mr. Speaker, I do see six separate parts of article I, section 8, that deal with our national security. This is not something that we have interpreted in the Constitution. These provisions are in the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, under our Federal system, under our Constitution, one of the mandates, the primary mandates of this body, is to provide for our national defense, to raise an army, to raise a navy, to provide for the operation of our military. It is right there in the Constitution. Most every other thing that we do now is not in the Constitution by definition. In this case, our responsibility to our military is defined by the founders of our country in very clear terms. So with all the other rhetoric about all the other programs we want to fund, what bothers me is we are not hearing Members of Congress talk about our support for the military.

Now, in my own estimation, Federal funding for national security has gone down dramatically as a percentage of total Federal revenues taken in. In fact, when I give speeches around my

district and around the country, when I compare today's budget to the budget of a previous administration, and I usually pick John Kennedy, because it was a similar period of time of relative peace. It was after Korea, but before Vietnam, when John Kennedy was the President. We were spending 52 cents of every Federal tax dollar on the military. We were spending 9 percent of our Nation's gross national product on defense.

In this year's budget, Mr. Speaker, we are spending approximately 15 cents of the Federal tax dollar on the military, about 2.5 percent of our GNP on defense. I would agree that after the cold war ended there was a need for us to make some cutbacks. In fact, I supported many of those cutbacks. But, Mr. Speaker, many of us feel that we have gone too far.

Many of us feel that over the past 10 years two major problems have occurred simultaneously. I say 10 years, because this did not start with a Democrat administration and having me come up and just rail against a Democrat President.

This first problem actually started with the end of a Republican administration, 10 years ago, because that is when the cuts in defense spending started to occur dramatically. That is when we began those cuts that brought us down to a 15 cents on the dollar expenditure for national security, 2.5 percent of our GNP. Many would argue it is the largest continual decrease in defense spending in the history of America.

Now, granted, the dollar amounts that we are spending today are more than they were 10 and 20 years ago, but the actual percentage of available dollars and the percentage of our gross national product has decreased dramatically.

But at the same time that defense spending was going down, something else occurred, and that was the commanders-in-chief of our country, the Presidents, as allowed under our Constitution, decided in their wisdom they would deploy our troops.

If you take the period of time from the end of World War II until 1991 and look at all of the administrations during that period, from Democrat Harry Truman to Republican George Bush, Sr., they could have deployed our troops any time they wanted. They deployed our troops a total of 10 times in major deployments over a 40-year time period. In the previous 10 years, starting in 1991 up until 2001, we have had no less than 37 major deployments, a massive increase in the use of our troops.

Mr. Speaker, none of those deployments, except for Desert Storm in 1991, was paid for. In each case when our troops were inserted into harm's way by the President, we in the Congress were left to try to find a way to pay for the cost of those deployments.

Bosnia, we were told, would end 5 years ago when President Clinton promised the troops would be home by

Christmas. We are still in Bosnia today; and we have spent approximately \$18 billion of our DOD budget, unfunded, taking it out of other programs, to pay for the Bosnian operation.

Add in Haiti, Somalia, East Timor, Macedonia, Colombia, and every other one of those 37 deployments, and you see that while our defense budget was going down and deployments were going up, as our troops were deployed, the Congress had to find a way to pay the bill.

What the Congress did over the past 10 years, Democrats and Republicans together, was to take money out of that already-decreasing defense budget. That meant that we did not make the repairs on our military bases. That meant that we cut back on reordering spare parts. That meant that we did not build new base housing, that we did not modernize our barracks, that we did not build new child care centers. That meant that we did not build new schools.

Today, Mr. Speaker, we are in the midst of a train wreck. We do not have enough dollars to pay for the cost of our military's operations. We are over-committed overseas. So this trip was to give us a chance to see what problems have been created at our bases here in the continental United States because of a lack of appropriate funding for infrastructure and for what we call readiness.

Mr. Speaker, what we found on our trip was outrageous and was immoral. We have an all-volunteer force today, risking their lives, giving their entire lives up to guaranteeing our freedom and security, which is the basis of our Constitution and our free democracy.

We saw living conditions worse than public housing in our inner-cities. We saw raw sewage leaking out of barracks, with a stench so bad you could not stay in the building, where the military had to completely excavate under the building because a pipe had been leaking for years raw sewage.

We saw showers on the first floor of barracks where our voluntarily enlisted military personnel had to take their showers with 3 to 4 inches of sewage water around their feet coming from the upper floors of that barracks because of improper drainage.

We saw drinking water taken out of taps that was so dirty and cloudy you would not give it to an animal, let alone a human being or a member of our military.

Mr. Speaker, I have been in Congress for 15 years. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. ORTIZ), who was my cochair of this trip, has been in Congress longer than I. We were joined by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. REYES), a newer Member, and a brand new freshman Member, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCHROCK). We were also joined by four leaders of the Pentagon, representatives of the Secretary of Defense and Secretaries of the services. All of us were appalled. All of us were

shocked. None of us believed that things were as bad as they are.

Now, on this trip, Mr. Speaker, it was unique, because we traveled over 8,000 miles in military aircraft, a plane that took off from Andrews Air Force Base. As we traveled around the country, because our crew could not continue to fly around the clock as we wanted, we transferred off to helicopters. We transferred off to P-3s. We kept moving from 7 in the morning until midnight each night, and we interacted with the troops on a continual basis.

When we arrived at a base, they knew we were coming; and they knew we were not going to be dressed in suits and we were not looking for fancy meals. We had told our base commanders that we wanted to see the worst conditions that existed on that base and we wanted to see when we arrived examples of what was happening, because of the lack of support by the Congress and the White House to deal with the ongoing maintenance of our facilities. That is what they showed us.

Each trip to each base lasted for approximately 1½ to 2 hours, and was filled with very real and visual examples that we documented and of which photographs will be presented to Members of this Congress in a written report, hopefully next week.

Throughout the entire trip, we took the media with us. Every step of the way, nothing was off base, no conversation was off limits. We had the media traveling with us to document what we saw. The Army Times, Navy Times, Air Force Times, and Marine Times next week will come out with a massive report on what we found, for starters.

Mr. Speaker, the way that you maintain a building or a property is to invest a certain percentage of the value of that property in maintenance each year. That maintenance prevents that building from deteriorating and from collapsing before its scheduled lifetime. The industry standard for maintaining what is called real maintenance is approximately 4 to 6 percent of the value of the replacement cost of that building, that structure or that complex.

In the military, we could never achieve a 4 to 6 percent rate, so our standard is 1.75 percent. The standard for the Defense Department is that we put 1.75 percent of the replacement cost value of our military bases in a budget each year, which is used to repair broken pipes, fix bad electrical outlets, take care of problems with housing and maintaining roadways and bridges and runways.

In our travels across America in 15 states, in 4 days, at 24 installations, no base that we went to in any of the services came within one-half of that 1.75 percent figure. The highest amount was 0.8 percent. Most bases were funding their real property maintenance at between 0.1 and 0.4 percent of the replacement cost value.

Now, what does that mean? That means that to pay for all those deployments that we got ourselves involved

in in the nineties, we took money away from keeping the quality of life for our troops healthy, and we used that money to pay those unpaid bills.

It was great while it lasted. The last administration was able to use money for the other purposes. Members of Congress were able to claim that we were balancing the budget. All during that time period less and less money was spent on maintaining our infrastructure.

We saw the results. Let me go through the results briefly. Later this week and next week in a 2-hour Special Order we will detail with a bipartisan task force in very great detail what we found at our military bases.

We started out at the Westover Air Reserve Base in Massachusetts; and there we found out, among other things, that we cannibalize one C-5A aircraft for every launch we make. What does cannibalize mean? That means because we have not bought enough spare parts, we have to take apart other planes and take parts off of them to keep a certain few planes flying in the air. Cannibalization of our military aircraft and equipment is now the standard. So to keep our military operational, we have maintenance people all across America at every base taking apart perfectly good aircraft to use those parts to keep other aircraft operational.

At McGuire Air Force Base in New Jersey we learned that one half of the entire fleet of vehicles, 1,000 vehicles, need immediate replacement. What does that mean? That means that we do not have the vehicles to perform emergency services, that we do not have vehicles to maintain the integrity of the boundary lines of the base, because we have not replaced those vehicles, maintained them, changed the oil, because the money to do that went to pay for these deployments overseas out of a rapidly decreasing defense budget. The airfield lighting system was inadequate. The underground heating and air conditioning infrastructure was breaking down and had severe problems because of a lack of maintenance.

At the Naval Air Station in Oceana where we visited in Virginia, we saw encroachment, where local towns were being built right up to the boundary line of the facility, causing us problems in allowing our troops to train, with people that knew there was a base there buying houses and developers building complexes, and then the people who moved next to the base say we do not want the noise; we do not want the planes flying over. So the military has to curtail the flights, the pads and the abilities of our troops to prepare. We had a fighter wing command at Oceana in temporary buildings that you would not house your worst enemy in.

At Norfolk, we had a pier recently collapse. The entire pier just collapsed, where we station our supreme naval vehicles. In fact, the majority of our piers at Norfolk were built prior to

World War II or during World War II. They cannot handle our new aircraft carriers. They cannot handle our larger ships. They are not equipped. They do not have the electrical outlets, they do not have the supplies to maintain the water and power needed to take care of America's fleet, even though it is much smaller in the 21st century. We are working on those piers, but the work is not going fast enough.

□ 2300

In our air station in Norfolk, we saw nine World War II hangars that are still being used, but they all have serious deficiencies. The naval air station in Newark does not meet our antiterrorism guidelines, nor our force protection standards, and most of the barracks at the naval air station do not meet our criteria to have a one-plus-one standard of two soldiers with one bathroom in one living unit.

At Fort Riley, our next stop in Kansas, we saw old, inadequate motor pools. We saw military personnel being asked to change engines out in the driving heat, the drenching rain, and the freezing cold, because we have not put the money on the table to build new motor pools, because they are not sexy like an aircraft carrier or a B-1 or a B-2 bomber. I mean, who can crow about having built a motor pool?

So the people we are asking to maintain our fleet and our tanks and our artillery are having to work under impossible conditions, outside, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, because we have not given them the facilities with which to repair this equipment that we spend tons of money on.

Then, at Fort Riley, we have a provision that makes no sense at all. We allow the State governments to tell our military what buildings they can or cannot repair. If a building is old on a military base, instead of the base commander deciding where to spend the money, the State historic commission comes in and says, oh, no, you are not going to tear that building down; you are not going to leave that building unattended; you are going to repair that building.

Mr. Speaker, that is ridiculous that we have a State historic commission determining for our base commanders what buildings can or cannot be fixed up. If a State historic commission wants to repair an old building, let them use State money, but they should not have the power to take money away from the vital improvements needed for our troops to be put into historic preservation.

We traveled to Fort Lewis. At Fort Lewis we saw that 60 percent of our barracks are nowhere near standard. We have a major spare parts problem for every piece of equipment, urban encroachment issues and major problems with Army Reserve spare parts for helicopters.

At Whidbey Island out in Washington State, there is earthquake damage to a flight simulator building that occurred

months ago that is still not repaired because we have no money, no money for upgrading and improving these earthquake problems. Now, we can spend billions of dollars to reimburse local towns for earthquakes, but we did not spend the money for the military to fix the earthquake damage that they had from earthquakes and wildland fires and other natural disasters that have hit their facilities.

We have no wash rack for the P-3 aircraft. It all must be done outside in the freezing cold weather. A 50-year-old control tower does not even have a view of the entire runway. In fact, we heard about a child care facility on Whidbey Island where there has been a recurring problem of mold, where there is a lack of fire protection systems that would otherwise close that complex down if it was not on the military base; and at one point in time, they had the child care center closed down for a 30-day time period.

Mr. Speaker, these are people that volunteer their lives to serve our country. These are people who did nothing wrong. These are people who are working for our government who are providing a number one service required by our Constitution to provide for our national security, and we have let them down. Democrats and Republicans, White House and Congress, we have let them down.

We traveled along to Mountain Home Air Force Base in Idaho, the home of our B-1s, and as we arrived there and we were in the hangar looking at a B-1B bomber that had just been fixed, the commanding officer introduced us to a young mechanic. We were told that mechanic had just worked 6 straight days, 12 hours a day. Now, in the military you do not get overtime. We basically own you when you are in the military. This young mechanic left his family, including leaving and ignoring personal commitments he had with his kids, to work 6 straight days, 12 hours a day, to take parts off another B-1 to put this B-1 back in the air. Of the six planes in the B-1 squadron at Mountain Home Air Force Base, three are operational. The others are either inoperable or have been cannibalized, because the backlog for some spare parts for the B-1 is over 360 days.

Mr. Speaker, that B-1 mechanic did not join the military voluntarily to work 12 hours a day, 6 days a week because we did not supply enough spare parts.

We have one F-15, one of our top tactical fighters in our fleet, on the ground for 43 straight days being used to cannibalize it to keep other planes in the air.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the story at Mountain Home alone. I am giving highlights of each base. These problems are occurring at every military base we visited.

We went on to Edwards Air Force Base in California. There we have lost some frequency spectrum so they cannot conduct their normal routines

that their sons and daughters would be put into barracks where raw sewage would be leaking underneath those barracks, they would demand our heads. That is what is happening at Lackland.

We had one technical training dorm that was so bad the entire dorm was evacuated and could not be used anymore. Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems were so old they were breaking. They had to move a fleet of portable chillers from one building to another so the soldiers and sailors and Air Corpsmen could continue their work, continue to eat in the heat, because the chillers had broken down because they had not been maintained and repaired.

We went on to Fort Hood. In Fort Hood, we saw something unusual, a couple of things unusual. We had a young female, and we happened to visit her dorm because as we went around the bases and they took us to housing, we would stop the bus and get out and go talk to ordinary people. We talked to some wives that were standing out in front of their moldy family housing at one site. We talked to recruits. We talked to young servicepeople. Whoever we saw, we went over and grabbed them to get some anecdotal feedback.

In this case, we went to a dorm or a barracks and a young woman was there. She let us see her room. This young woman went out with her own money that she makes, whatever that meager amount of money is, and bought a caulking gun, caulk, and tile because the holes and the cracks in her room were so bad that she decided that rather than wait for months and months and never get it fixed, she would take it upon herself to spend her own money, seal up the cracks, put new tiles in the bathroom, and try to make her living unit more comfortable.

Mr. Speaker, that is not what we asked of these young people when they volunteered to serve our country.

Then, Mr. Speaker, at Fort Hood, as we interviewed some more individuals, we met a young colonel who had just gotten back from Bosnia. He gave me a statement that I think should make this entire body, the White House, and the other body, feel a sense of shame upon all of us.

He said, "Congressman, I just returned from 9 months in Bosnia. I am a career military person, and I joined voluntarily to serve my country. But let me tell you, Congressman, we had better facilities in Bosnia than here in the U.S. That is why our morale is a 5 on a scale of 1 to 10, because of work conditions and housing conditions."

That was a young colonel, and I have his name, just returning from Bosnia, who tells a group of Members of Congress that he had it better in Bosnia, with our tax dollars, by the way, than he does at his own base here in America at Hunter Army Airfield in Georgia.

We also met someone else at Hunter Army Airfield in Georgia. We were in a

building where they maintain our fleet of helicopters. Hunter is important because that is our primary staging area for the Army of the future to move out quickly to respond to any situation worldwide. They have to be ready to go in 22 hours. That is their mandate, so they are our cutting edge.

In the facility where this equipment is maintained, there was no air conditioning.

□ 2320

Yet down in Hunter Army Air Station where this place is, it gets very hot in the summer. So a young private first class, new to the military, realizing the working conditions were intolerable, went out with his own money and bought an air conditioner so that everyone in his unit could have a cooler working environment while they did the job of preparing and maintaining the cutting-edge force for America's first-response worldwide.

We saw inadequate sewage treatment. We saw all housing facilities at Hunter declared unacceptable.

Our final stop was Fort Bragg, limited training ranges, only 60 percent of what is needed; 600,000 square feet of storage vehicle maintenance facilities not available to maintain this cutting-edge complex. Our supply and storage buildings are World War II. The largest barracks deficiency in the Army is at Fort Bragg.

We went into one barracks at the end of the night. It was about eleven o'clock on our last night before we came home. In this one barracks it was like a scene from a World War II movie. I thought we had gotten rid of these years ago. An actual barracks, not for new recruits, but for people being trained at Fort Bragg, open with about 24 beds and little individual storage lockers. No privacy, everybody out in the open in one common living area.

Mr. Speaker, there is something wrong here. There is something wrong when the men and women who wear the uniform to serve the country have it worse than some of the people in public housing in our cities. We have to bear the responsibility, Democrats and Republicans, White House and the Congress. We have failed our military miserably.

In my eulogy to FLOYD SPENCE, I credit him with leading the Congress with bipartisan votes to plus-up \$43 billion over Clinton's request, our defense budgets over 6 years. I do not know where we would be if we had not done that.

Mr. Speaker, we have got problems. To fix up every backlog of repair and maintenance today, the estimates by the Pentagon are \$150 billion. We could never meet that need. In a report that was mandated by last year's defense bill, the Pentagon said that we need \$4.9 billion just to catch up on basic maintenance and repair. So, Mr. Speaker, as a final response to our trip we are going to recommend that this body take action.

This is a disaster as bad as any flood. It is a disaster as bad as any hurricane. It is a disaster as bad as any wildlands fire. It is a disaster as bad as any building collapse. These are the young men and women in uniform who volunteer to do the one thing that our Constitution mandates, and that is provide for our national security; and they are doing it in substandard facilities. They are doing it without spare parts. They are doing it without adequate training. They are doing it where they risk their lives, not from their duty but in training and living. That is unacceptable. I challenge this body and the other body and the White House to come together in an emergency situation because that is what this is, and pass a special one-shot funding package that I am preparing right now, separate from our defense request by the President, to take care of these immediate needs. If we have to declare it off budget, so be it.

If there are others in this body that say, wait a minute, you will take this from some other source, so be it. This is an emergency. These troops deserve better.

Mr. Speaker, let me say to our men and women in uniform what I said to them in each of our stops, our 24 stops around the country. By the way, many of our colleagues joined with us. We had about 20 Members of Congress from both parties come out and meet us as we stopped at each site. This is what I told our military personnel: you have got to stop being taken for granted.

It is amazing, Mr. Speaker, I asked some of our troops at the bases, How many of you are registered to vote? In some cases less than half of them raised their hands. We in Congress have taken aggressive steps to have Motor Voter, where we register people when they go to get their car license renewed. We have taken steps to have people register to vote at welfare offices. Yet we do not do anything to encourage our military personnel to register at military bases.

I am challenging our military leaders to have a massive voter registration drive so that when a young recruit comes to a base, he or she is automatically registered to vote, I do not care what party they are, so they can start to have an influence on how we spend their money, so they are no longer disenfranchised, so they have a right to vote.

I also encourage this body to pass a waiver so they can choose to register at their place of residence or military base, whatever is most convenient for them. So they can vote as college students do, where they work. College students can register at the college campus where they go to school. Why should not military personnel be able to register at the base where they are stationed and still keep the benefits that would accrue from living back in their original home while they are serving their country?

If we empower the military, if the military speaks out, then our colleagues in this body will stop taking them for granted.

Mr. Speaker, some will say that yes, you are right. We should spend some money; and, therefore, we should take it from the President's request for missile defense. No. It does not work that way, Mr. Speaker.

The President has made the case based on threat assessments, that we have a new threat we have to deal with and that requires a significant new amount of dollars. To blame this shortfall on the President's tax cut or the President's request for missile defense is looking at and denying the fact that for 10 years we have not given the military the money they need. We allowed the previous two administrations to cut defense spending too low and not provide the support for real property maintenance and upgrades in spare parts and housing to support the quality of life for our troops.

We need missile defense as much as we need to support our troops, and the tax cut just occurred this year. It did not cause the shortfalls that should have been corrected over the past 10 years that my colleagues on the other side will now try to blame on President Bush. That does not work, Mr. Speaker.

It is time for us to come together as we did on this trip, Democrats and Republicans, House Members and Senators along with the President and demand that we deal with this emergency.

In dealing with this emergency, it is going to cost us money. We have to replace the dollars that were taken away from maintaining the quality of life that our troops deserve, the spare parts that our military equipment needs, the improvements to runways and housing and hospitals and child care to keep our military's morale up. If we do not do that, then we will have failed our military personnel, and we will have failed the Constitution of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, next week we will do an in-depth bipartisan summary of the trip. Our colleagues will join us, hopefully, the 20 or so that were a part of this whirlwind trip; and together we will move forward to pass a supplemental piece of legislation dealing with the emergency needs that we have now evidenced in a firsthand way that our military has across the country, across all services.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. McNULTY (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. HAYES (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today and the balance of the week on account of recovering from hip surgery.

Mr. CRANE (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today and the balance of the week on account of illness in the family.

Mr. HORN (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today and the balance of the week on account of official business.

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 Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.
Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. CAPPS, for 5 minutes, today.
Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.
Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. CLAYTON, for 5 minutes, today.
Ms. WATERS, for 5 minutes, today.

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

Mr. GRUCCI, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. HUNTER, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. BUYER, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Member (at her own request) to revise and extend her remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

SENATE BILLS AND A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REFERRED

Bills and a concurrent resolution of the Senate of the following titles were taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 238. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct feasibility studies on water optimization in the Burnt River basin, Malheur River basin, Owyhee River basin, and Powder River basin, Oregon; to the Committee on Resources.

S. 329. An act to require the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a theme study on the peopling of America, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

S. 356. An act to establish a National Commission on the Bicentennial of the Louisiana Purchase; to the Committee on Resources.

S. 491. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior, pursuant to the provisions of the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act to participate in the design, planning, and construction of the Denver Water Reuse project; to the Committee on Resources.

S. 498. An act to amend the National Trails System Act to include national discovery trails, and to designate the American Discovery Trail, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

S. 506. An act to amend the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, to provide for a land exchange between the Secretary of Agriculture and the Huna Totem Corporation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

S. 509. An act to establish the Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm National Heritage Corridor in the State of Alaska, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

S. 737. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 811 South Main Street in Yerington, Nevada, as the "Joseph E. Dini, Jr. Post Office"; to the Committee on Government Reform.

S. 970. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 39 Tremont Street, Paris Hill, Maine, as the "Horatio King Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Government Reform.

S. 1026. An act to designate the United States Post Office located at 60 Third Avenue in Long Branch, New Jersey, as the "Pat King Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Government Reform.

S. 1144. An act to amend title III of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11331 et seq.) to reauthorize the Federal Emergency Management Food and Shelter Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

S. 1198. An act to reauthorize Franchise Fund Pilot Programs; to the Committee on Government Reform.

S. Con. Res. 62. Concurrent resolution congratulating Ukraine on the 10th anniversary of the restoration of its independence and supporting its full integration into the Euro-Atlantic community of democracies; to the Committee on International Relations.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Mr. Trandahl, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 93. Federal Firefighters Retirement Age Fairness Act.

H.R. 271. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey a former Bureau of Land Management administrative site to the city of Carson City, Nevada, for use as a senior center.

H.R. 364. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5927 Southwest 70th Street in Miami, Florida, as the "Major Williams Scrivens Post Office".

H.R. 427. An act to provide further protections for the watershed of the Little Sandy River as part of the Bull Run Watershed Management Unit, Oregon, and for other purposes.

H.R. 558. An act to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 504 West Hamilton Street in Allentown, Pennsylvania, as the "Edward N. Cahn Federal Building and United States Courthouse".

H.R. 821. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1030 South Church Street in Asheboro, North Carolina, as the "W. Joe Trogdon Post Office Building".

H.R. 988. An act to designate the United States courthouse located at 40 Centre Street in New York, New York, as the "Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse".

H.R. 1183. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 113 South Main Street in Sylvania, Georgia, as the "G. Elliot Hagan Post Office Building".

H.R. 1753. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 419 Rutherford Avenue, N.E., in Roanoke, Virginia, as the "M. Caldwell Butler Post Office Building".

H.R. 2043. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2719 South Webster Street in Kokomo, Indiana, as the "Elwood Haynes 'Bud' Hillis Post Office Building".