

the Pentagon's negative—I don't care—attitude towards bookkeeping. I see good bookkeeping as a constitutional responsibility of every department of Government. Taking cash out of the pockets of hard-working Americans and appropriating to an agency that fails to control it is just not acceptable. That must change.

Now, in my new position on the Finance Committee, the Senator from Iowa is responsible for legislation that authorizes the Government to reach deep into every citizen's pocket to get this money. I want to be certain that money is spent wisely, No. 1. And No. 2, I want to be sure that there is an audit trail on that money for all of us to see. That audit trail, that accounting system, that information in that accounting system on past expenditures is a very necessary basis for President Bush and Mr. Rumsfeld to make a decision of how much more the Defense Department budget should be ramped up.

I thank the Senator from West Virginia for his willingness to work on this issue. Trying to solve the bookkeeping problem at the Pentagon, earning a clean audit opinion, would restore accountability to bookkeeping at the Pentagon. This is a worthy cause.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

THE MILITARY BUDGET

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I will continue on with a few more comments about the national security issue, which is being highlighted this week, of course, by the President.

We have talked about the most obvious issue dealing with the military; that is, having to do something for personnel. Without that, we can't have a military. We can't have defense. Furthermore, it is very unfair. We ask people in the military to serve the country, and they do that willingly. We have a responsibility to ensure that they are reasonably reimbursed and their living conditions are kept as high as possible.

Obviously, the military budget is one of considerable concern. It is the largest item in discretionary spending. We have discretionary spending of about \$630 billion. Nearly half of that, \$300 billion, is defense. It is very large. On the other hand, when we ask our country to defend against threats around the world—and this is not necessarily a peaceful world at this time—then we have to expect that it will be costly. We are faced with, of course—at least in the notion of many—what has been a period somewhat of neglect over the

last 8 years where the military has not had the highest priority, has not had as high a level of support as many believe it should have.

Last year the uniformed Service Chiefs testified to a requirement of between \$48 and \$58 billion per year in additional funding above the 5-year projected budget. That is the impression, that is the notion from the military leadership of the amount of dollars that are essential. One of the things that makes that even more obvious in terms of needs is that while the military has not been supported as highly and as strongly as it might be, this administration that just passed has deployed more troops overseas than at any previous time during the same length of time. In the past decade, our active duty manpower has been reduced by about a third, active Army divisions have been cut by almost 50 percent. Not all that is bad, of course.

As the Senator from Iowa indicated, there are changes that need to be made. Certainly the economic accounting, the management of the economics in the military could stand some strengthening. I am sure that is the case. We ought to expect that kind of expenditure of taxpayer dollars. However, we do find ourselves in a state where we do need to change things. The lack of spare parts for aging systems has forced the military to take parts off of other vehicles and other airplanes and cannibalize other kinds of things. It is so widespread that personnel in the Air Force apparently spent 178,000 man-hours over 2 years removing parts from bombers and fighters and transports, some of those kinds of things that certainly do not bode well for the kind of military we, indeed, want to have.

Obviously, there are needs for change. Often bureaucracies—and frankly, the military has its share of bureaucracies—find it difficult to make change: We have always done it that way so we are going to continue to do it that way. Certainly that can't be the case with the military, as things have changed substantially.

I heard testimony this week before one of the committees that indicated there could be a good deal more cooperation and unification among the branches of the military to make it more economic. That is probably true.

One of the items that is being considered is the national missile defense. There is a great deal of interest in that. It is not a new idea. It has been around for about 20 years. It certainly has merit. If we thought we could develop some kind of an overall network of defense mechanisms, that would be a wonderful thing to do. On the other hand, there is substantial question about what the costs would be. I think there is substantial question even about the technology. It has not yet been developed.

I favor moving toward a national missile defense. I don't think we are ready to sacrifice some of the other

things that we do because we are talking about doing a national missile defense.

First of all, as I mentioned, it is very expensive. We don't really know the cost. I have been to Space Command in Colorado Springs, CO. They indicated that even though they are enthusiastic about it and doing experiments, we haven't reached the technological level where it would work. I think there is a legitimate role for the missile defense soon. However, I think we are going to run into, No. 1, the cost; and No. 2, technology; and, No. 3, certainly we are going to have difficulties dealing with some other countries in terms of the agreements that we have.

I think we need to understand that, at least from what we know about it now, it is going to be a relatively limited defense system, probably based on the islands of Alaska. It will be designed to deal with rogue states that have very limited capacity but certainly have the scary capacity to put a missile in the United States, even though certainly that would not win a conflict for them. But it would do a great deal of damage to us.

I think the Space Command is working on the kind of system that would be there in case something came from a couple of the countries that are likely to be out of control in doing these kinds of things. They would be limited to defending against a limited number of reentry vehicles. They would not be able to deal with the whole issue of a major missile attack, of course.

I guess what I am saying is that we now have a nuclear capacity of our own, probably the strongest in the world. We have had it for a good long time. We deal in three areas, of course, land-based missiles, ship-to-ground missiles, and ground-to-air missiles. They constitute a very important part of our defense in terms of a deterrent. I think it is very necessary to continue to do that.

The President has talked about reducing the number of nuclear weapons. I think that makes sense. We are in the process of doing that now. We are in the process of removing some of our missiles under START I, and we are moving toward the restrictions that will be there in START II, in terms of the land-based missiles we have had over time, of course, the peacekeepers that have been multiple warhead missiles. These are being changed and replaced by the Minuteman III missiles, which would be a single warhead. We can do a good deal of reduction through this ongoing arrangement. There needs, in my view, however, to be the time START II or even START III was agreed to with the Russians, a minimum of 500 missiles that we would have, which brings us down to that 2,000 missiles that we talked about—the warheads we talked about in START I and II. We could do that. There is some talk about the idea of a hair trigger alert. There was something on TV last weekend, taken from the

command room in one of these missile silos. I have been through this, and the fact is, there is a real system for ensuring that is not a hair trigger kind of a thing. It doesn't happen unless there is approval from three different areas before that happens. But more important than anything, I think it does really take from us the day-to-day deterrent that is out there, and the idea, of course, that if you only had a few missiles, we put your missiles in that place and do away with those—when you have them spread as we do now, basically about three different places land-based, then it is possible to do that.

I guess I am encouraged that we are talking about a missile defense system, that it would be there to augment the idea of maintaining our capacity to have this deterrence. I think it is terribly important that we do that as part of our strategy. We can move forward to reduce those numbers and get down to a START II agreement. I hope we do that.

We are going to be going forward, of course, on a number of things that all have to do with budgets, all have to do, then, with surpluses and taxes. These things are all related, of course, and should be. I am hopeful, frankly, from the standpoint of the budget, that the President pursues the idea that we ought to be able to have a budget that is basically inflation increases, which we overstepped last year substantially.

Occasionally, there are areas—certainly in health care—where we are going to want to expand. But I think regardless of the surplus it is important that we try to keep Government spending under control in some way. We seem to think if there is money, we ought to spend it. I think when you go out into the country and talk to people, they are very concerned about having a Federal Government that is continuously growing, that is more and more involved in our lives. And we would like to see these kinds of activities shifted back to the States, counties, and local governments, where government is closest to the people being governed.

So when we talk about budgets, we have to look at that in terms of the tax reductions. We are finding from the other side of the aisle a good deal of resistance to returning the money that people have overpaid in taxes to the people who paid it. That is a pretty stiff argument to undertake. We need, of course, to set up spending to pay down the debt. I think we have an opportunity to deal with these things in a balanced way so we can come out of this session of Congress—if we are really persuaded as to what we want to do, I hope we may give some thought, individually and collectively, to what we want to have accomplished when this session of Congress is over. What do we want to say we have done in terms of tax relief? What have we been able to accomplish? What do we want to say we have been able to do in terms of controlling spending? What are our

goals in terms of paying down the debt?

I think these are some of the things we talk about a great deal. We talk about them kind of independently and, obviously, everybody has a different idea, and that is legitimate. It seems to me that we ought to be able to establish fairly and collectively some goals, some vision of where we want to be, what we want to have accomplished when these 2 years are over, and then be able to measure the things we do against the attainment of those goals.

Unfortunately, I am afraid that, from time to time, it is not always the measurement of individual actions as to how they contribute to overall attainment. Will there be agreement on all of those things? Of course not. That is the nature of this place, the nature of any group that makes decisions. They don't all agree. They have different views and values, and we have to deal with that. There is nothing wrong with that. But we do want to be able to move toward accomplishing those things that we believe are good for the country, good for the long-term merits, and that, it seems to me, is our challenge.

I yield the floor and 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. BENNETT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

NATIONAL DEFENSE

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I understand there have been speeches given this morning with respect to the military and the decision by President Bush to take a very serious look at what is happening in the military—a pause, if you will, in the funding and planning until we get our hands around exactly where things are.

I want to comment about the wisdom of that particular approach. If I may, I want to go back to the most inconsequential military career perhaps in the history of America—my own. It will demonstrate what happens in the military and demonstrate the power of inertia because once something gets started in one direction, it continues in that direction until some outside force is put upon it. That is not just Newton's law of motion; that is the law of motion in government as a whole.

I went into the military in 1957. I joined the Utah National Guard and was sent on active duty for training, first to Fort Ord, CA, and then, because my Guard unit was in the artillery observation business, to Fort Sill, OK.

I went to Fort Sill, OK, to be trained in sound ranging. If that does not mean anything to you, Mr. President, I would not be surprised because sound ranging is a military skill that reached its apex

of applicability in World War I. It had some applicability in World War II, very little in Korea, and virtually none in 1957 when I was trained in it.

But the inertia of the military organization was such that no one had reviewed the pattern of training people in sound ranging. So going forward, as a body in physics, moving in the same direction, it continued in the same direction. I and my fellow classmates were put through a program on sound ranging.

As it happened, I graduated first in my class. That is not as big an achievement as it might sound because I was the only member of the class who had been to college. I was a college graduate; the others were draftees who were high school graduates; and if I had not finished first, it would have been a disgrace.

Having finished first, once again the pattern of inertia in the military decreed that I should become an instructor and that the next sound ranging course that would go through Fort Sill, OK, would be taught by me. This is very flattering, except that my time on active duty with the National Guard would expire before the next class would convene.

I spent the remainder of my time in the day room, or at the post library, or doing other things because there was absolutely nothing for me to do. At the time I wondered: Doesn't anybody review these things? Doesn't anybody look at this and say: Wait a minute, this is a program that has long since outlived its usefulness, should be stopped, and we should just forget this?

No, nobody did. I got so bored, I went in and volunteered to teach other classes and had to go back to school, if you will, on my own time to learn logarithms so that I could teach that mathematical skill to the surveyors in the school. Basically, this was the least distinguished and least significant military career in American history, but it demonstrates what happens when we allow inertia to take over. We allow the military to go forward in one direction, and we do not ever stop and say: Wait a minute, are we doing the right thing?

Summarizing it another way, there are some historians who say the generals always fight the last war; they are always prepared for the last battle, not the battle that is to come.

The cold war is over. That is a cliché. Like most clichés, it happens to be true. Much of our military is geared towards fighting the cold war. Much of our military is geared towards a circumstance where the military commanders involved are comfortable with the way things are going because they are the way things have been.

The idea that there should be a careful look at where they are and a reassessment of the direction they are taking is a little bit threatening; it is unsettling; it implies uncertainty. The one thing many military men hate worse than anything else is uncertainty.