

That episode marked the beginning of the end for the Reagan defense budget buildup. In just two short years, in large part due to Kris' leadership as a staffer, the defense budget was frozen, and remained so until 2 years ago—a span of 14 years.

We had a vote. It was 50-49 on the floor of the Senate when we adopted that as part of the budget of 1985.

During those 2 years, Kris helped uncover the infamous over-priced spare parts, such as a \$500 hammer and a \$7,600 coffee maker purchased by the military. He did so by working with whistleblowers throughout the defense community, such as Ernie Fitzgerald, Tom Amlie, Colin Parfitt, and many others. Their work exposed tens of billions of dollars of waste and mismanagement of the taxpayers' defense dollars.

Through the inspector general community, Kris discovered that the Justice Department rarely prosecuted defense contractors. By 1986, eight out of the top ten defense contractors were under criminal indictment or criminal investigation for contract fraud. In that year, he was named in *Esquire* magazine as one of the top eight staffers in Washington to watch.

In the late 1980's and early 1990's Kris investigated the POW/MIA issue. His work, which uncovered many unanswered questions about missing soldiers from the Vietnam War, went toward establishing a Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs. I was a member of that Committee, and Kris staffed it for me. The Committee was able to find answers for many of the families who, up until then, had none. And millions of pages of POW/MIA records were declassified for the public to see.

In 1995, after Republicans took control of the Congress, House and Senate Republican leaders asked Kris and a small group of staffers to share their oversight skills with the new majority staff. Having performed oversight over the Defense and Justice Departments for a dozen years, Kris with his colleagues, now began to apply their oversight experience to the rest of the federal government. The result has been increased and systematic oversight by Congress across the board.

During that time, Kris focused on overseeing the FBI. Such systematic oversight of the FBI, on a committee that has always been reluctant to investigate the bureau, has not been successfully done in recent times in the Senate. Because of Kris' staff work, much has been done to help restore the public's confidence in federal law enforcement.

Among the celebrated cases Kris investigated or helped investigate were: the FBI crime lab scandal; the FBI's poor investigation of the TWA Flight 800 crash; the incidents at Waco and Ruby Ridge; Chinese espionage cases, including the FBI's botched case against Wen Ho Lee; and the campaign finance scandals of the 1996 election.

Kris' legacies will be the tens of billions of dollars he helped to save the taxpayers through his work, as well as his work on behalf of whistleblowers. After all, without the whistleblowers, there would be no savings. He depended on them, from the staff level, for information. And so he fiercely defended their right, through legislation he helped draft on my behalf, to share information with Congress. He assisted in the drafting and/or passing of major whistleblower statutes including: the False Claims Act Amendments of 1986; the Whistleblower Protection Act; and, the yearly-passed anti-gag appropriations rider for federal employees.

Appropriately, Kris is leaving Capitol Hill to become the executive director of the National Whistleblower Center, an organization that supports and protects whistleblowers throughout government. There, he can continue his work on behalf of the taxpayers, and fighting for those who dare to speak the truth and risk their jobs.

The taxpayers will indeed be missing a trusted ally with Kris's departure. But the impact of his accomplishments will be with us a long time. He'll still work to save the taxpayers money, but he won't be on the public payroll. That's the principled crusader he is!

One additional thought that just came to my mind as I was going through what I prepared today about Kris: Going back to the budget freeze of 1980 and the fact that the spending on defense needed to be ramped up, it was ramped up to fast. There was a lot of money wasted.

We are going to spend money on defense because we have to. But we ought to learn from the lessons of the 1980's, and hopefully our new President, President Bush, will move fairly slowly in that area so that the money will be invested wisely and spent wisely and so we don't have a situation such as we had in 1982 where one assistant Defense Department secretary said we put the money bags on the steps of the Pentagon and said come and get it. We want to keep our hands on those money bags that we set before the Pentagon as we spend money on defense.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine is recognized.

(The remarks of Ms. COLLINS on the introduction of S. 27 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, 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. 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.

NEW DIRECTIONS

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, it is a good day to begin a new session. It is a

good day to begin, of course, the new year with many challenges before Members. I think all Members have enjoyed the last several days with many folks visiting from home, particularly from Wyoming, because of the new Vice President. We had a great turnout. We were very pleased and are all very proud of our new Vice President.

We have a great deal to do, as is always the case. I think particularly this year we are faced with seeking to accomplish many things. We talked about many of them last year but did not in every case succeed in getting them finished, so we are back at it again. Hopefully, we will see some new directions; we will see some new directions from the White House certainly. I was pleased with the President's talk on Inauguration Day and his defining the goals that he has set forth. Certainly during the next couple of weeks we will see a great deal more defining of that. Our first obligation, obviously, is to finish the nominations so this administration can be in place.

We will see some new directions, and hopefully they will be the kinds of things upon which we can agree. I believe we will see more emphasis in the private sector, trying to encourage and cause things to happen that need to be done for the country in terms of individuals doing them, in terms of local governments doing them, as well as the contribution of the Federal Government.

I think we will be inclined to move toward reduction in taxes. I certainly hope so. We have the highest tax rates now being paid of anytime since World War II. This is a time, of course, when there are lots of things we need to do. One of them is paying off the debt; another is certainly to be able to fund and finance those things that we want to strengthen, such as education, such as health care.

On the other hand, the fact that we have a very healthy economy which has produced a surplus doesn't mean we necessarily need to grow the role of the Federal Government. On the contrary, I think each time we do something in the Federal Government, we ought to analyze the extent to which we are able to do that at the State or local level, or that it is more efficient to do it here simply because we have more money.

That does not mean we need to increase the role of government. We will allow States and local governments to have more of a role in the decision-making process. We have talked about it already in education, certainly strength in education. We will look for more flexibility so local schools can use the dollars as they need them. There is a great deal of difference, often, in the needs between Wheatland, WY, and Philadelphia. We should have the flexibility to use those dollars locally as is appropriate.

We will certainly be seeking to balance resource development. I live in a State that is 50 percent owned by the

Federal Government. We are very heavy in resources—oil, gas, coal. We are the largest producer of coal in the United States. We need to be able to increase our efforts in the area of energy, at the same time protecting the environment. We can do that. We have to increase the opportunity for access to things such as Yellowstone Park and at the same time keep the principle of the parks there, to protect the resource. We can do those things with some more flexibility, I believe.

Obviously, we need to strengthen the military. We have had a time, a peaceful time, with a tendency to not emphasize the military as much as I think we should. Our best opportunity for peace in the future is to have a strong military and to keep it that way, to have national preparedness. Certainly we need to do that.

We need more emphasis on opportunity for everyone to do well in this country. Opportunity is what we need to seek.

We need to strengthen the economy. Hopefully in some of our tax activities we can leave more dollars in the private sector, to be invested to create jobs. These are the things I think will be paramount for us.

Will there be differences in view? Of course. I hope we have moved to a situation where we will be less partisan in our approaches, where we recognize there finally has to be a solution. But will we agree on everything? Of course not. We have different ideas. We represent different areas of the country. But in large we represent the United States and we need to understand that there are things we need to accomplish.

I think there will be agreement on general topics such as education, health care, and military. At the same time, of course, there will be disagreements on the details of how those things are implemented—but that is OK. That is the system. We all have different views. We all have different reasons to be putting forward our views. They are legitimate. And the system does work.

I suspect we will certainly be looking at education, we will be looking at strengthening the military, we will be looking at Social Security to ensure young people paying into their first job will have the opportunity to reap benefits 40 years from now. I think that is our obligation.

Energy has been a problem for some time, but it was not recognized, of course, until we started having blackouts in California and started having increases in gasoline and natural gas prices. Now, it is a problem that more people recognize as a problem.

I hope in our tax relief efforts we also have some tax simplification so we do not have to go through all these things with every little tax reduction being oriented at affecting behavior. That really is not the purpose of taxes. Taxes are to raise the amount of revenues necessary to conduct the Government, not necessarily to direct everyone's behavior.

Education is a legitimate concern. The first responsibility, of course, for education is that of the States and local governments. We want to keep it that way. The Federal Government's contribution is about 7 percent of the total expenditures. So we need to assist and to make sure there are opportunities available for all children everywhere, but we need to have local control and we need to have flexibility. And, of course, we need accountability, not only for the Federal Government's contribution but to all taxpayers to ensure those dollars are being used to produce the kind of product each of us wants.

Sometimes we find ourselves with an excessive amount of paperwork. I hear about it quite often since my wife is a special education teacher and spends a good deal of her time on paperwork, which detracts a little from her other work.

I believe a powerful military is our best hope for the future. We need modern equipment. We also need to reorganize the military. As times change, things are different than they were 50 years ago. Of course when you have no draft in place, it is voluntarily, we need to make it attractive, not only for people to come but hopefully for people to stay. What we have now is people come to the military, they are trained to fly airplanes or be mechanics or whatever but then leave to go to more attractive places in the private sector. We will need to go to that. I think one of the alternatives is to allow young people to have individual accounts that can be invested in the private sector to create a much higher return to ensure there will be benefits. I understand that is not something everybody agrees to. Certainly we all agree we should be setting aside those dollars that come in for Social Security for Social Security and not spend them on other things. So I am sure we can do a great deal there.

In energy, we have gone a long time without a real energy policy, a policy that will direct where the resources go, how we encourage production of domestic resources and not allow ourselves to become a total captive of OPEC and foreign nations. That is not only oil and gas, but we have various ways of producing energy, of course, hydro, wind, and nuclear—things that can be used. With a policy of that kind, certainly we can do some things.

We are also now looking at some short-term problems. California has a real problem. Regardless of how they got there, they have one, and there is some peeling off of that in other places. So hopefully we will have a longer term policy in addition to that and certainly be able to do something on the short term.

So I think we have a great opportunity as always to serve this country. That is why we are here. I hope we can agree upon the role of the Federal Government and how we strengthen that and how we finance that and how we will be able to leave people's money in

their hands. How we do that will turn a lot on how we work together here and work with the administration during these next at least 2 years.

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

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

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, let me congratulate the Presiding Officer, my new colleague from the State of Nebraska, for his eloquence and leadership and his direction as he presides over this body. I want him to know—and I think I speak on behalf of all of us—we appreciate his being here and presiding.

(The remarks of Mr. HAGEL pertaining to introduction of S. 22 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

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

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

Mr. WELLSTONE. The Senate is in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Senators have 10 minutes.

THE SENATE AGENDA

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, Democrats have introduced some of our legislation. George W. Bush is now President Bush. His administration is coming in. We will have votes on nominees.

I think the important word here is civility. I also point out—not that I am opposed to civility—I think when people in the country—in Minnesota, Nebraska, and around the Nation—say they want us to be bipartisan, what they are not saying is, we don't want any debate. People expect debate on issues and they expect us to have differences that make a difference, especially in their lives.

But I think what people are saying is two things: No. 1, we want to have civility, we want to see civility; and the second thing that people are saying is we want you to govern at the center. But, colleagues, they are not talking about the center that I think pundits in D.C. talk about, or too many of us talk about. I think what people are talking about is not the usual labels but, rather, we want you, Democrats and Republicans, to govern at the center of our lives. That is what people are talking about, the center of their lives.