country. What we have in Philadelphia in this instance is a situation where the local bar association and several law firms in the country have helped put up money to pay the salaries for up to 11 AmeriCorps students who will be working in that community as lawyers and as law students, helping people that have problems, helping people understand the Government and this system. The Federal Government is going to put out $4,900 to allow that student to work in that community. We have helped them get a college education and they are paying back with their services, and getting enough of a stipend from the Federal Government to at least survive and to be able to continue that work and do it full time. We are talking about full-time workers.

This is not a giveaway program. Does it cost anything? Of course, it costs. But how much does it cost to build a prison? We spend $300 million for a national program to try to get people to have a partnership with their Government, to get a college education, and give something back to the community. We spend billions of dollars, I suggest, building prisons in this country and running prisons in this country, to incarcerate young men and women who have gone by the wayside, maybe because they did not have a National Service Program, because nobody cared. Nobody told them they have a reciprocal obligation to give something back to a Government that has helped them get a college education.

I have heard Speaker GINGRICH in the other body talk, time and time again, about communities, family, and service, and giving something back to the communities. This program is an example of giving something back to the communities, of national service, of saying: I want to help my Government do better. If my Government helps me get a college education, I am pleased, but I also recognize that it is not free. I will give back to my Government in the same ratio that they have given to me.

I think that produces a stronger community. I think that produces stronger families. I think that produces a sense of what America is all about. So I would suggest when we talk about national service, let Members first get our facts straight. Let Senators first understand the real cost.

I suggest, second, let Senators join together if there are problems, and let us improve the program. Let us not, by incorrect factual information, try to kill a program that I suggest is in keeping with what America is all about.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BURNS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

BASE CLOSINGS

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, in less than 2 months the Secretary of Defense will forward to the 1995 Base Closure Commission his so-called ''hit list'' of military base closings. Although it is an excruciating exercise, I think we would all agree that closing obsolete military bases is a painful necessity.

With the end of the cold war, the Pentagon estimated that 30 percent of our domestic military bases must be shut down. Due in large part to the efforts of Senator SAM NUNN, of Georgia, and former Senator Alan Dixon, of Illinois, Congress created a bipartisan Base Closure Commission to help us make the necessary choices of which bases to close.

I believe the base closure process is sound. It serves as a model of how to make difficult and politically sensitive budget-cutting decisions. The Base Closure Commission successfully completed base closure rounds in 1988, 1991, and 1993.

As this chart to my left indicates, these three rounds of base closings eliminated some 70 military bases throughout America. Some areas and some States were hit harder than others.

On March 1, 1995, the Commission will begin its very important deliberations once again, and before the year is through, the Commission will seek congressional and Presidential approval to close dozens of additional bases. We have been told that this list will be longer and painful. In fact, it has been said that this base closure round will possibly be equal in size to the first three rounds combined.

To be certain, base closings hurt. In communities that lose a base, thousands of jobs are terminated, businesses close down, millions of dollars in annual revenue disappear from sight. Mr. President, I am personally aware of that pain caused by base closure announcements. The 1991 Commission closed Eaker Air Force Base, a B–52 base located in Mississippi County, AR. They also took away a majority of the work at Fort Chaffee near Fort Smith, AR.

Most of our colleagues in the Senate have witnessed the departure of the military in at least one community in their State. My colleagues from California lost eight major military bases in 1993 alone, as this map so indicates.

We have seen communities react with anger and frustration to the news of base closings. We have witnessed their fear about surviving such a tremendous economic blow. For most base closure towns, the military was the largest employer, as in the case of Eaker Air Force Base in Blytheville, AR.

Mr. President, I visited this base in 1992, 1 year after the closure announcement, to see how the local townspeople were coping with the impending loss of the Air Force.

What I found was a community that desperately wanted to beat swords into plowshares. I found also a community that was receiving virtually no help whatsoever from the Federal Government. In fact, this community claimed that Washington was their largest roadblock to a speedy recovery. The citizens of Blytheville needed the Air Force's cooperation and the Federal Government's resources. What they received instead was bureaucratic lip service and endless red tape.

The same was true in other communities across America. The problems were so severe that the former majority leader, Senator George Mitchell, decided to create a special task force to devise a strategy for easing the impact of defense budget reductions and for making a smooth transition to a post-cold war economy.

Senator Mitchell asked me to become the task force chairman. With 24 Democratic Senate colleagues, we began studying what the Federal Government's role should be, if any, to help in our Nation's ongoing transition from swords to plowshares.

Our 1992 task force concluded that the end of the cold war had caught our country by surprise, and that we were late in devising a national strategy for helping our cold war workers, communities and companies find a new direction.

We also found that the United States of America was better prepared to handle a much larger transition in the years following World War II. As early as 1943, 2 years before the war had ended, President Roosevelt made the decision to begin planning for the war's end and the difficult conversion to a peacetime economy. He had created the War Demobilization Office and charged this new entity with devising a national strategy. From this office emerged the GI bill and many other initiatives that helped our country grow and prosper in the years that followed.

In 1992, however, 3 years after the Iron Curtain began to crack, our Government still had no comprehensive strategy for beating swords into plowshares. History, Mr. President, should have taught us better. The lesson learned after World War II, and in other periods of defense downsizing, was that our Government has a duty to provide comprehensive transition assistance to those affected by reductions in our Nation's defense expenditures.

Some might say, Mr. President, that this is not the function nor the role of Government. I would submit, however, that our Government should become a partner in this endeavor and not an obstacle to economic recovery.

To compensate for our slow start and to finally allow our Government to become a partner instead of an obstacle, our 1992 task force recommended sizable increases in defense reinvestment funding and programs. That same year

a Republican task force, commissioned by then-minority leader Senator DOLE and chaired by former Senator Warren Rudman, drew similar conclusions.

This bipartisan agreement allowed Congress to quickly pass sweeping legislation to begin easing the pain of defense cutbacks and to help our cold war veterans beat swords into plowshares.

In the area of base closures, I am very pleased to report that success stories are just beginning to arise in many communities across our country. I would like to highlight a few.

At Chase Field in Beeville, TX, 1,500 jobs have now been created since the base closed in 1993. Pease Air Force Base in Portsmouth, NH, has created 1,000 new jobs since it closed in 1991. England Air Force Base in Alexandria, LA, has created over 600 new jobs due in large part to the J.B. Hunt Trucking Co.'s decision to use the old runways to train truck drivers.

I might add as a personal note, Mr. President, that the J.B. Hunt Trucking Co., proudly, is an Arkansas-based firm.

Each of these communities is learning that the loss of a military base can often bring opportunities for growth and renewed economic activity. They worked hard to achieve these results. They deserve tremendous credit.

In each of these cases, however, our defense reinvestment programs are helping these communities rebound. Congressionally approved funds for planning grants, worker retraining, environmental cleanup, infrastructure, aviation improvements, and other necessary measures are helping these towns prepare for their future and replace lost military jobs.

Without this assistance, base closure communities would not be able to rebound and find new work. But Congress and this administration provided the necessary support for our defense reinvestment programs. These are good investments, and they are just now beginning to bear fruit in base closure communities across our country.

The same can be said of our technology reinvestment programs that are focusing today on boosting American competitiveness in the private sector by integrating our military and civilian technology sectors. These programs are vital to our economic security, and as a result, are vital to our national security. They are certainly worthy of congressional support.

I am so deeply concerned by the recent statements by some of our colleagues in Congress who are suggesting these programs are pork, that they are a waste of money, and that they are in some way damaging our ability to fight and win future wars.

I truly hope, Mr. President, that our 11 new colleagues in the Senate do not share this view. I would like to caution my new colleagues, and the Senate as a whole, against turning a cold shoulder to the men, the women, the communities, and the companies that fought and won the cold war. We have only begun to see the results of our wise investments.

Mr. President, we are about to enter the base closing season once again. When the Commission submits its final list, workers and communities in our States will suddenly be thrown into economic downturn and in some cases economic despair. When this occurs, these defense reinvestment programs will not appear wasteful. Rather, they will be a helping hand to our communities' economic recovery efforts.

It is my sincere hope that this base closure round, with the pain and economic trauma that it is expected to bring, will once again underscore the importance of helping beat swords into plowshares.

Mr. President, last evening I had a visit with Senator SAM NUNN, the ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee. We have decided, Mr. President, to invite Defense Secretary Bill Perry to come to Capitol Hill shortly following the Clinton administration's budget submission to brief any and all interested Members of the Senate on the importance of funding these defense reinvestment programs. Secretary Perry strongly believes that these programs are worthy of our support, and I am proud to join with Senator NUNN in setting up this forum in which Secretary Perry can come forward and answer our questions about these particular programs and why they should be supported in Congress.

I encourage my colleagues, both Republicans and Democrats, to attend this particular briefing, the time and place of which will be announced soon.

Mr. President, I thank the Chair for recognizing me. I yield the floor. I see no other Senators on the floor; therefore, 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. BIDEN. 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. BIDEN. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry, are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, it is my understanding—I ask unanimous consent I be able to proceed to speak in morning business for 20 minutes.

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

OPPORTUNITY, PROMISE, AND ''THE BELL CURVE''

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, during a too short ministry among us of Martin Luther King, Jr., he spoke very eloquently, with great insight and I believe with profound wisdom, on many aspects of American life. He taught us about the promise of equality and about the meaning of community and about the greatness of our human potential. But of all the many things that Dr. King taught us—and we just memorialized his birthday the beginning of this week—of all the things he taught us, one in particular has held much meaning for me, particularly in recent months. And that is the standard he set for human behavior and the qualities he identified as being the true measure of humanity.

Dr. King challenged us, in his words, to ''rise above the narrow confines of our individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity.''

He reminded us that one of the true standards of success is ''the quality of our service and relationship to humanity,'' not, as he put it, ''the index of our salaries or the size of our automobiles.'' Dr. King's standard for humankind, set by him, was a very high one. To take responsibility not only for ourselves but for others as well, to take our guide—more as our guide a moral and rich vision of ourselves and the community of man. In this way he challenged us to become the guardians of our most precious American legacy, and that is the promise that each of us deserves: an opportunity to fulfill our potential, whatever that potential may be.

And that is what I would like to speak to this morning, and about why I am concerned that this Nation, and some of our leadership, is turning away from that promise.

The richness of Martin Luther King's vision has long inspired many Americans but today I find I need, and I believe our country needs, his inspiration even more. For today we hear increasingly from those who speak of human potential, not with hope but with hopelessness; whose voices do not celebrate the strength of community, but echo the fear of diversity; and who would abandon the fundamental American principle of equal opportunity to the long discredited notions of superiority and inferiority.

Today we hear from those who confuse the lack of opportunity with the inability to achieve.

Let me say that again. I think today we are hearing from too many people who confuse the lack of opportunity a person has with the inability of that person to achieve.

Today, we have a new chorus of voices whose sense of community extends no further than those just like themselves and who dismiss the potential of others who are different from themselves. Today those voices are drawing support from a book called ''The Bell Curve,'' the new intellectual sophistry, engaged in, as it has been over the past two centuries in this country, to justify an agenda that is abhorrent, in my view, to American principles.

This book attempts to persuade us with the language of science to forget about hope, to forget opportunity, to forget the power of new challenges and the promise of an inspired mind; to forget, indeed, the very principles on