

ORDER FOR RECESS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, on behalf of the leader, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess under the previous order following the remarks by Senator DASCHLE and my remarks.

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

OPERATIONAL SUPPORT AIRLIFT AIRCRAFT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to take about 5 minutes or less to discuss an item that I will be bringing up on the defense authorization bill. I have what you might consider a very minor amendment but one that gets at the basic issues that I have been trying to present to my colleagues on mismanagement in the Department of Defense.

My amendment deals with the fleet of executive aircraft and the VIP helicopters. Most of these airplanes are known as the operational support airlift aircraft.

I want my colleagues to know that this amendment comes from studying positions taken by people within the Defense Department or outside the Congress of the United States. So my amendment does not come from an idea that I dreamed up.

My position rests on sound ground because I think it is a studied position made by a lot of people that we in this Congress ought to respect. It is based on two very recent reports: a Department of Defense IG report dated June 1995; a GAO report also dated June 1995. But that is not all. My thinking on this issue is based upon a mountain of Department of Defense studies. And these all point in one direction, that we should cut the number of planes in this operational support airlift fleet.

I would just like to tell my colleagues where I am trying to go with this amendment. During the upcoming debate that will happen later on this week on the Defense authorization bill, I am going to talk about a long string of Department of Defense reports and recommendations to cut the OSA fleet.

In February 1993, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Colin Powell, recommended a reduction of this fleet of aircraft. In September 1994, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General McPeak, recommended a reduction in this fleet of aircraft. In May of 1995, the Department of Defense Commission on Roles and Missions recommended a reduction in the OSA fleet of aircraft.

The Department of Defense Commission on Roles and Missions was chaired by Mr. John P. White. Mr. White recommended reductions in the OSA fleet just before becoming Deputy Secretary of Defense.

Mr. President, this issue has been studied to death, not by CHUCK GRASSLEY's own research, but by my merely

reading report recommendations made by people within the Department of Defense by people at the General Accounting Office, people that we ought to have some respect for.

So how many studies does it take to cut a Pentagon program? The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, and now the Deputy Secretary of Defense have all recommended cuts in this fleet of VIP aircraft. I think that most Members of this body would respect the judgment of people like Colin Powell, General McPeak, and Deputy Secretary of Defense White. When they say that this ought to be done, then it seems to me we ought to do it.

It kind of bothers me that these recommendations, once they are made, just do not happen. Why do we have to do it in the Congress? Why do I have to bring it to the attention of my colleagues to make it happen? When I got done reading the May 1995 roles and missions report, I decided to write a letter to Mr. White. My letter to Mr. White is dated July 12, 1995. I hoped Mr. White might be willing to help me develop a plan to downsize this fleet of aircraft. I want to know if he would be willing to work with me in developing a plan to carry out his own recommendations.

Mr. White's reply to my letter is dated July 31, 1995. I ask unanimous consent to print this correspondence in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the letters were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, July 12, 1995.

Hon. JOHN P. WHITE,

Deputy Secretary of Defense, Pentagon, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: I am writing to you about the need to reduce the Department of Defense's (DOD) fleet of Operational Support Airlift (OSA) aircraft.

The DOD Inspector General and General Accounting Office (GAO) have just concluded independent reviews of how these aircraft are used and how much these operations cost the taxpayers. Copies of those reports are attached for your consideration. Both clearly indicate that many of these flights are wasteful and unnecessary.

The GAO found, for example, that the Andrews AFB, Maryland to Wright-Patterson AFB near Dayton, Ohio is the heaviest traveled OSA route. Both locations are readily served by commercial airlines offering LOW government contract airfares. Continental and United Airlines have 5 to 6 flights each way between Washington and Dayton every workday. The one-way airfare on Continental is \$98.00. The cost to move comparable numbers of passengers from Andrews to Wright-Patterson on an OSA C-21 aircraft is at least 3 to 4 times higher than on Continental Airliners—if all appropriate expenses are included.

There is no way to justify the use of military aircraft for routine travel between destinations like Washington, D.C. and Dayton, Ohio. Unfortunately, the bulk of OSA flights are between cities like Washington and Dayton—cities connected by convenient and efficient commercial airline service. In most cases, this service is provided by government contract carriers at discount prices.

Mr. White, I bring this particular issue to your attention for one simple reason. As the Chairman of the most recent "Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces," you concluded that "there are too many OSA aircraft . . . and recommended changes to eliminate excess capacity and save money." Your findings and recommendations—as presented in the May 1995 report—are fully consistent with a long list of similar DOD studies. All agree on one point: Inventories of OSA aircraft exceed wartime requirements. Reductions are now in order.

Well, Mr. Secretary, shortly after recommending cuts in the OSA fleet, you became the Deputy Secretary of Defense. So this is where "the rubber meets the road." It's time to make the cuts that you recommended. I have developed my own plan for "eliminating excess capacity and saving money." A copy of my plan is attached for your review. It would reduce the OSA fleet by 50 percent by the end of fiscal year 1997 and would save about \$550 million annually, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

I would be the first to admit that it is very difficult for Congress to successfully legislate a solution to a problem like this—without the cooperation of the department involved. I would much prefer to work with you in developing a more acceptable solution. With that in mind, would you please review my plan and make any suggestions you consider appropriate. I would like to be in a position to offer a proposal when the defense authorization and appropriations bills are brought to the Senate floor for debate.

Your cooperation in this matter would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,
U.S. Senator.

DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE,
Washington, DC, July 31, 1995.

Hon. CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR GRASSLEY, This is in response to your letter of July 12, 1995, concerning your proposed amendment to the Defense Authorization Bill for Fiscal Year 1996 to reduce the Department of Defense's Operational Support Airlift (OSA) aircraft fleet.

As a result of the Commission on Roles and Missions recommendation, the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff is conducting a study to validate the size of the OSA fleet needed in wartime, based on supporting two major regional conflicts (MRCs) which occur nearly simultaneously. During this study, slated for completion this fall, the Joint Staff will evaluate Service and Theater CINC-stated requirements to avoid unnecessary duplication or overlapping requirements. At the same time, we are implementing a plan under which the Transportation Command will closely monitor the peacetime scheduling and patterns of use of these aircraft.

On the basis of these efforts, we will determine the most effective and efficient organizational structure to schedule, maintain, and operate the fixed-wing OSA fleet based upon a combination of wartime effectiveness and peacetime efficiency. Until I see the results of these analyses, it would be premature for me to endorse a legislative approach.

Sincerely,

JOHN P. WHITE.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, quite frankly, Mr. White's letter to me is a disappointment. Mr. White says that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff "is conducting a study to validate the size of the OSA fleet in wartime." Now the committee has signed off on this approach. Another study is