

2010, and has returned to the faculty of the University of Texas, from which he had been on an extended leave of absence as the result of his appointment by former President George W. Bush to the Department of Defense and subsequently to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Dr. Klein began his tenure at the NRC on July 1, 2006, having been appointed by the President as the agency's Chairman. He continued to serve in that role until May 13, 2009, when President Obama designated Gregory B. Jaczko as the NRC Chairman. Although Dr. Klein would have preferred to return to the University of Texas at that time, he elected to remain an NRC Commissioner from May 2009 to March 30, 2010, to ensure continuity of the Commission until the President could nominate, and the U.S. Senate could confirm, his successor and two additional new Commissioners to fill existing vacancies on the Commission.

Dr. Klein's tenure as the NRC Chairman coincided with the rapid acceleration in the nuclear industry's plans for the development of a new generation of U.S. nuclear power plants. By the time of his departure from the agency, the NRC had received 18 applications for 28 new nuclear power plants after nearly three decades in which no new nuclear plants had been constructed in the U.S. This dramatic resurgence of the nuclear power option created an urgent and very critical need for the NRC to hire an unprecedented number of new staff since many of the agency's most experienced technical staff were nearing retirement age and the agency had critical skill shortages in such areas as construction inspection. Dr. Klein provided oversight and direction to the recruiting effort, which at its peak would result in net annual increases of approximately 250 new staff. In the absence of this effort, the NRC would not have been able to complete its technical reviews of new applications on a time frame that would support the nuclear industry's plans or meet the Nation's growing need for new sources of clean, safe, and affordable energy.

At the same time, Dr. Klein recognized that the resurgence in interest in nuclear power was a global phenomenon that was occurring both in countries with established nuclear power programs and countries with no prior experience with nuclear power. He consistently emphasized the critical importance of establishing and maintaining a strong, independent national nuclear regulatory authority in all countries considering the nuclear power option in his numerous meetings with his international regulatory counterparts in foreign countries, in meetings of international organizations like the IAEA, and during his frequent trips to foreign countries. Noting that an accident anywhere is an accident everywhere, he also ensured that the NRC provided assistance in setting up national nuclear regulatory bodies when requested by the host country.

Dr. Klein understood that for the NRC to continue to be an outstanding regulatory agency that could serve as a model for foreign countries, it needed good people, a strong safety culture, and the right technology. He observed that when he arrived at the NRC in July 2006, the agency had an outstanding technical staff and a strong safety culture, but was far behind the times in its technology infrastructure. He spent considerable time and effort in upgrading NRC's technology infrastructure not only to ensure improved communication within the NRC and with its stakeholders, but also to enable the NRC to attract and retain the young people that would become the core agency staff in the future.

As the NRC accelerated its hiring of new staff after 2006, however, the existing NRC headquarters complex, the White Flint Complex in Rockville, MD, could no longer accommodate the headquarters staff, forcing the NRC to rent additional space in four other buildings in the Rockville area. This dispersal represented a return to conditions existing at the time of the Three Mile Island accident in 1979, when the NRC was widely dispersed in 11 buildings in the Washington Metropolitan area. A study published after the accident cited the multiple, scattered locations of the agency's headquarters staff as a factor hampering the NRC's response to the 1979 accident. Consequently, Dr. Klein made it one of his highest priority goals as Chairman to reconsolidate NRC headquarters in a single location in the vicinity of the White Flint complex. Most of the preparatory work and obtaining local government, GSA, and Congressional approval for the construction of a third building at the White Flint complex occurred under the guidance and direction of Dr. Klein during his tenure as Chairman.

Dr. Klein has made very significant contributions to maintaining the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission as the world's first and most experienced nuclear regulatory body and has demonstrated over the last 7 years his commitment to public service and protection of the public health and safety. I am therefore pleased to ask my Senate colleagues to join me in recognizing this outstanding public servant and in wishing him and his family success in all his future endeavors.●

TRIBUTE TO AARON MARTIN

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I honor Aaron Martin, a native of Stuttgart from my home State of Arkansas. His bravery and that of his fellow servicemen and women made national headlines recently as they captured a group of Somali pirates in the Indian Ocean.

A 1994 Stuttgart High School graduate, Martin was among the sailors who took on a small gang of Somali pirates in the early morning hours of April 1. The USS *Nicholas*, a guided

missile warship, was tracking the pirates when they opened fire in Indian Ocean waters, according to reports. The USS *Nicholas*, which saw combat in the first Gulf War, returned fire and disabled the small ship.

Martin is the son of Bruce and Jannette Martin of Stuttgart. He and his wife Natalie have an 8-year-old son and a 12-year-old daughter.

Along with all Arkansans, I am grateful for the service and sacrifice of all of our military servicemembers and their families.●

CONGRATULATING THE LITTLE ROCK AIR FORCE BASE

● Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, today I congratulate Little Rock Air Force Base and its community council for winning the prestigious 2009 Abilene Trophy, which is presented annually to a civilian community for outstanding support to a nearby U.S. Air Force Air Mobility Command Base. The winner is determined by a selection committee of the Abilene Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee in Texas, with final approval by the U.S. Air Force Air Mobility Command.

According to COL Greg Otey, Little Rock Air Force Base Installation Commander, "the council's steadfast support of the base, its missions and its people haven't gone unnoticed. I've said many times that we are blessed to have such a supportive local community, and this award validates everything I've been saying since I arrived here last year."

Little Rock Air Force Base is known as the "Home of C-130 Combat Airlift" in large part due to the outstanding relationship among its community partners. The relationship between the base and local community remains as strong today as when it began in the 1950s, and community support is integral to the base's ability to accomplish its mission.

For example, in 2009, ground was broken on a new Joint Education Center, a higher-learning institution open to both military members and civilians. The city of Jacksonville voted to support the center with another \$5 million of its own. Airpower Arkansas, a subset of the Community Council, raised more than \$50,000 from local business and individuals for the base's 2010 air show. Civic leaders sponsored base events such as the Air Force Ball, the Annual Awards Ceremony, and the Black Knight Heritage Dinner. These leaders also took time on Thanksgiving and Christmas to serve meals to Airmen at the base dining facility.

I commend the Little Rock Air Force Base and its community council for their efforts, hard work, and dedication. Along with all Arkansans, I am grateful for the service and sacrifice of all of our military servicemembers and their families.●