

THE CHAMBER

The Wichita Area Chamber of Commerce

MILITARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Friday, October 23, 1992

11:45 a.m.-The Club-McConnell AFB



11:45-12:20 a.m.

I. Lunch Served

12:20-12:25

II. Welcome & Introduction of Guest
-Don Gaylor
Military Affairs Committee

12:25-12:45

III. Comments from Senator Dole

12:45-1:00

IV. Questions & Answers

1:00

V. Adjournment

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Wichita Chamber Military Affairs Committee

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Head Table:

Senator Bob Dole

Colonel Ed Ott
Commander
McConnell AFB

Colonel Frank Scoggins
Commander
KS Air National Guard

Don Gaylor
Military Affairs Committee

Tim Witsman
President
Wichita Chamber

Bernie Koch
V.P.-Government Relations
Wichita Chamber

October 21, 1992

STATUS OF RECONSTRUCTION AT MCCONNELL AFB

HOUSING

Broke ground on 102 units of family housing about two weeks ago. This is a \$9 million project and should be ready in September, 1993.

COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CARE FACILITY

Under construction for four months now. The total cost for this project is around \$20 million. Will be ready in December, 1993.

CAR WASH/ PAVILION

Under construction for a few months now; project total around \$700,000. Will be ready in March, 1993.

ARTS AND CRAFTS CENTER/ AUTO HOBBY SHOP

Will begin reconstruction in the coming weeks; project funded at around \$900,000.

COMMUNITY CENTER

Site preparation is completed. Will begin construction soon and is scheduled for completion in March, 1994. This is a \$14 million project.

REMARKS BY
SENATOR BOB DOLE
MILITARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Thank you Don. It is great to see the tremendous progress being made here at McConnell. Things have come a long way from the aftermath of that devastating tornado. You can see change all around and that is good news for McConnell and for Wichita.

**Colonel Ott, you have inherited
some real challenges but a great
base.**

**There is a lot of talk about
change these days. "Change" is
the buzz word being thrown
around by politicians, voters, and
the media. Just about everyone is
talking about change as if it were
a new concept -- and as if change**

is always good. An example of bad change is the evolution of the defense bill. In 1969, at the height of the Cold War, with the Vietnam War raging, and communism on the march, the Defense Authorization bill passed by Congress that year consisted of 14 pages. Probably more than enough to cover the job. This

**year, with communism defeated,
the collapse of the WARSAW Pact,
Eastern Europe liberated, and
defense spending in its seventh
straight year of real decline, the FY
1993 Defense Authorization Bill
has grown to 674 pages. Even
accounting for inflation, that is a
pretty hefty increase. And I
wonder how many volumes it will**

^{Their}
be if the Liberals get ~~there~~ way
and zero out defense all together?

I am hear to say that, good or
bad, change is inevitable -- it is
inescapable. Change is a fact of
everyday life. And I'm not sure
that any one party or group has
cornered the market on "change".

Last June, when the President of
Russia, Boris Yeltsin landed here

at McConnell Air Force Base, and his Russian built aircraft pulled up next to our B-1 bombers, I saw more than a few heads shake. It was one of those defining moments when you realize just how different the world is than just a few short years ago.

We are more secure today than ever. The Cold War has ended,

the Berlin Wall has fallen, Eastern Europe, once enslaved by Communism, is largely free.

But, the world is not a stagnant place. And history is not over.

New threats will rise just as others have declined. Saddam Hussein reminded us that the world remains a very dangerous place.

Conflict rages in Bosnia, turmoil in

**the former Soviet Republics
threatens the Asian land mass,
and deep hostilities endure in the
Middle East and Southwest Asia.**

**So, in my view, we must be very
cautious about how we manage
our national security resources
and take the long view of world
events. I believe we can and
should make reductions in our**

defense budget. The fact is, the Congress has cut the defense budget every year since 1985 and defense spending has declined in real terms every year since then. No one wants to talk about that.

President Bush and Secretary Cheney have embarked on a plan of prudent reductions consistent with the reduced threat. But, there

are many that want to cut deeper and faster. They see the defense budget as a ready source of cash to pay for a new social spending spree. In my view, this is not only dangerous, but it could do serious damage to our already weak economy.

When you slash at defense, you slash at jobs, communities, and

families. According to the study I requested from the Congressional Budget Office, doubling the cuts already planned in the defense budget -- as some are advocating - - would cost America over 2 million jobs -- 34,000 of these jobs would come from Kansas. I do not believe that we should spend one dollar more than is necessary

**for our national defense, but I
don't think we should lay off 2
million people just to pay for the
extended unemployment benefits,
low cost housing, and food
stamps for the people we just laid
off. There is a difference between
building down our defenses, and
burning them down. And that
difference will be felt right here in**

**Wichita as well as hundreds of
other communities across
America.**

**In my years in the Senate, I have
been a staunch supporter of
McConnell. We have seen things
change, different aircraft and
missions have come and gone.
But over the years, I have been
pleased to be out front making**

**sure that our base stays strong
and our military families well cared
for. The critical moment came in
1983, when the Air Force decided
that it was going to retire the Titan
missile wing here. The future of
McConnell was clouded. It
seemed to me that the new B-1
bomber was a natural fit for
McConnell and convincing the Air**

Force to put the B-1 here was the best way to secure the future of this vital base. With the help of many of you here, we were successful in doing that, and I think that has made the difference.

So, from my perspective, barring some of these radical defense cuts, the future of McConnell is a bright one. Don Rice, the

Secretary of the Air Force proved his commitment to McConnell in April of 1991. As you remember, the Secretary flew here at my request to see, first hand, the devastation brought about by the tornado. It was then that Secretary Rice publicly committed that McConnell would be rebuilt, -- that it would not close. Further,

both Secretary Rice and General McPeak supported my efforts to secure over \$40 million in emergency construction money to rebuild this base. I am please to see this money is being put to such good use. We will be breaking ground on the new "Mega Mall" soon, the hospital will be more modern and better

equipped than ever before. And the new family housing will be ready for occupancy soon. Every where you look, good things are happening at McConnell.

The Air Force has made it clear to me that they are totally committed to McConnell. This does not mean that the missions here will not change. No doubt

**about it, the Air Force is
changing -- and it will continue to
change. And McConnell will
change along with it, just as it has
over the years. From B-47's to F-
100's, from F-4's to KC-135's, from
Titan missiles to the B-1B,
McConnell has kept pace with a
changing Air Force.**

Nothing is certain these days.

But, I believe that barring massive cuts in our defense budget, the future of McConnell Air Force Base looks pretty good. In fact, I believe that the number of personnel assigned here could grow and that the mission here will be expanded and more important than ever before. And that is exciting news.

**The Wichita Chamber of
Commerce, the Air Force, and the
Kansas Air Guard are in
partnership here at McConnell.
Together, we will see change for
the better for McConnell, Wichita,
and Kansas.**