

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
JOINT ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

January 30, 2001

1:38 p.m.

SENATE MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Gary Wilken, Co-Chair
Senator Randy Phillips
Senator Loren Leman
Senator Drue Pearce
Senator Bettye Davis

SENATE MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Alan Austerman

HOUSE MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Eldon Mulder, Co-Chair
Representative Lisa Murkowski
Representative John Harris
Representative Jeannette James
Representative Bill Hudson

HOUSE MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Reggie Joule

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

Address by Lieutenant General Norton A. Schwartz, USAF Commander,
Alaska Command

PREVIOUS ACTION

none

WITNESS REGISTER

Lt. General Norton A. Schwartz
Commander's office
Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska 99506

POSITION STATEMENT: Gave presentation to joint committee.

Alex Spector, Director
Department of Veterans Affairs, Alaska Region

2925 DeBarr Road
Anchorage, AK 99508

POSITION STATEMENT: Discussed veterans' affairs in Alaska.

ACTION NARRATIVE

TAPE 01-1, SIDE A

Number 001

CO-CHAIR ELDON MULDER called the Joint Armed Services Committee meeting to order at 1:38 p.m. Present were Senators Phillips, Leman, Pearce, Davis, Co-Chair Wilken and Representatives Murkowski, Harris, James, Hudson and, Co-Chair, Mulder. Also in attendance were Senators Halford and Kelly and Representatives Cissna, Chenault, Fate, Coghill, Green, and Bunde.

CO-CHAIR MULDER said that the purpose of the meeting is to hear the address by Lt. General Norton Schwartz, Commander of Alaskan Command, Commander of Alaskan North American Aerospace Defense Command Region and Commander of Eleventh Air Force, all headquartered at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska.

General Schwartz is a 1973 graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy and has commanded special operations forces at every echelon. He has served four tours in the Pentagon and, prior to assuming his current position, he was the deputy commander in chief, U.S. Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida.

General Schwartz is a command pilot with more than 4,200 flight hours and has flown both rotary and fixed-wing aircraft. He is also a jump-qualified parachutist.

His major awards and decorations include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, the Defense Superior Service Medal, and the Legion of Merit.

CO-CHAIR MULDER welcomed General Schwartz to the Joint Armed Services Committee.

GENERAL NORTON SCHWARTZ thanked the legislature for the invitation to speak. He delivered the following address.

**COMALCOM'S PRESENTATION TO THE
ALASKA LEGISLATURE
30 JANUARY 2001**

- THIS IS A TRULY UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY. NOWHERE ELSE IN THE UNITED STATES WOULD AN ACTIVE DUTY, MILITARY COMMANDER DISCUSS ISSUES OF SHARED CONCERN WITH THE STATE LEGISLATURE. THIS IS INDICATIVE OF THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WE SHARE IN THE GREAT STATE OF ALASKA AND YOUR SUPPORT OF THE ARMED FORCES.
- YOUR WARM WELCOME RE-ENFORCES WHAT I HEARD LONG BEFORE SUZIE AND I ARRIVED IN ALASKA, AND HAVE EXPERIENCED FROM THE DAY WE GOT HERE--THAT ALASKANS ARE, BY FAR, THE FRIENDLIEST GROUP OF PEOPLE YOU WILL EVER MEET.
- AS I PREPARED FOR TODAY, I GAVE A LOT OF THOUGHT TO WHAT I SHOULD SAY. I WANTED TO ENSURE THAT I COVERED TOPICS OF INTEREST TO YOU, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY SOMETHING THAT IS RELEVANT TO YOUR JOBS AS ELECTED OFFICIALS, POSITIONS OF GREAT TRUST AND RESPONSIBILITY.
- SO THE QUESTION I ASKED MYSELF WAS, "WHAT CAN I TELL YOU ABOUT THE MILITARY THAT WOULD HELP YOU?" AND THE ANSWER IS ENGAGEMENT. IT'S HOW ALASKA'S MILITARY IS ENGAGED THROUGHOUT THE STATE AND AROUND THE WORLD--NOW AND IN THE FUTURE. AND I WILL RECOMMEND AN ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR YOU THAT OUGHT TO BENEFIT YOUR DISTRICTS AND YOUR CONSTITUENTS.
- TODAY, I'LL GIVE YOU A BRIEF LOOK AT THE WORLD SITUATION HIGHLIGHTING SOME OF THE SECURITY CHALLENGES IN THE PACIFIC REGION. AND WE'LL TALK ABOUT HOW ALASKA FORCES ARE ENGAGED AROUND THE WORLD. AFTER THAT I'LL TALK ABOUT WHERE WE ARE HEADED--OUR VISION FOR ALASKA IF YOU WILL--AND THEN SUGGEST A GAME PLAN OF HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED.
- BUT BEFORE I GET TO THAT, IT'S IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH WE OPERATE.

CHANGING WORLD / THREAT

- DURING THE PAST 10 YEARS WE HAVE ALL WITNESSED DRAMATIC CHANGES IN THE WORLD. THE DAYS WHEN THE UNITED STATES AND RUSSIA WERE THE WORLD'S SUPERPOWERS ARE GONE, AND DEMOCRACY CONTINUES TO SPREAD...FOR NOW. BUT...THE WORLD IS IN MANY WAYS, LESS STABLE AND MORE VOLATILE THAN IT WAS.

NORTH/SOUTH KOREA

- THE MOST DANGEROUS BORDER IN THE WORLD CONTINUES TO BE NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA, ALTHOUGH RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO KOREAS ARE

IMPROVING.

- VISITS BY SOUTH KOREAN AND U.S. OFFICIALS HAVE HELPED EASE TENSIONS AND SHOULD CONTINUE TO LOWER THE POTENTIAL FOR WAR ON THE PENINSULA.
- AND WHILE COMPLETE RECONCILIATION OF THE TWO COUNTRIES IS A POSSIBILITY IN THE LONGER TERM, THE PENINSULA WILL REMAIN A MAJOR CONCERN DUE TO ITS HISTORY AND THE NORTH KOREAN'S VERY REAL MILITARY CAPABILITIES.

INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

- LOOKING A LITTLE FURTHER WEST, THE INDIA AND PAKISTAN CONFRONTATION PERSISTS.
- RECENT REPORTS CONFIRM THAT GUERRILLA ATTACKS IN KASHMIR AND INDIA'S BALLISTIC MISSILE PROGRAM CONTINUE. SUBSTANTIVE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE PARTIES REMAIN ELUSIVE.
- ANY CONFLICT BETWEEN TWO NUCLEAR-ARMED COUNTRIES DEMAND OUR ATTENTION—AND THIS ONE CERTAINLY QUALIFIES. IF THERE IS ONE RELATIONSHIP THAT COMPETES WITH THE MIDDLE EAST FOR VOLATILITY, THIS IS IT.

CHINA AND TAIWAN

- MOVING ON TO CHINA AND TAIWAN...THE RHETORIC AND INTENSITY HAVE COOLED SINCE THE TAIWANESE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS LATE LAST YEAR. CHINA STILL MAINTAINS THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE CHINA AND THAT THERE WILL BE THE EVENTUAL REUNIFICATION OF TAIWAN AND THE MAINLAND.
- OUR CURRENT ASSESSMENT IS THAT CHINA WILL REMAIN PATIENT AS LONG AS TAIWAN MAKES NO OVERT, PROVOCATIVE MOVES TO PERMANENTLY SEPARATE ITSELF FROM THE MAINLAND.
- CHINA HAS A STAKE IN MAINTAINING REGIONAL STABILITY BECAUSE IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR THEIR GROWING ECONOMY AND EFFORTS TO BECOME A MAJOR PLAYER IN WORLD TRADE.

GENERAL INSTABILITY IN PACIFIC REGION NATIONS

- COUP ATTEMPTS IN FIJI, INSURRECTION IN THE PHILIPPINES, THE ONGOING CRISES IN INDONESIA AND THE POTENTIAL SPREAD OF RADICAL REGIMES COULD BRING INSTABILITY TO OUR DOORSTEP.

- ALL THIS HAS THE POTENTIAL TO CREATE SITUATIONS WHERE THE UNITED NATIONS, THE UNITED STATES, OR OUR ALLIES IN THE PACIFIC WOULD HAVE TO RESPOND.
- IN ADDITION TO THESE VOLATILE AREAS, THE PROLIFERATION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION IS ALSO OF CONTINUING CONCERN.
- IN A REPORT ISSUED JUST TWO WEEKS AGO, FORMER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE COHEN STATES:

"OUR UNRIVALED SUPREMACY IN THE CONVENTIONAL MILITARY ARENA IS PROMPTING OUR ADVERSARIES TO SEEK UNCONVENTIONAL, ASYMMETRIC MEANS TO STRIKE WHAT THEY PERCEIVE AS OUR ACHILLES HEEL."

- HERE'S AN INTERESTING FACT...THERE ARE AT LEAST 25 COUNTRIES THAT NOW POSSESS, OR ARE IN THE PROCESS OF ACQUIRING AND DEVELOPING CAPABILITIES TO INFLICT MASS CASUALTIES AND DESTRUCTION: NUCLEAR, BIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL (NBC) WEAPONS OR THE MEANS TO DELIVER THEM. NORTH KOREA, IRAN, IRAQ AND LIBYA ARE AMONG THESE COUNTRIES.
- IT IS ALSO CLEAR THAT MORE "STYLELIZED" THREATS ARE EMERGING, REQUIRING INCREASINGLY SOPHISTICATED RESPONSES ON OUR PART. THE TERRORIST ATTACK AGAINST THE USS COLE IN YEMEN, CONTINUED TENSIONS IN THE BALKANS AND THE ONGOING MISSIONS IN IRAQ ENFORCING THE NO-FLY ZONE ARE CASES IN POINT.
- BY AND LARGE, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE REALIZE THAT THE WORLD IS CHANGING AND DIFFERENT THREATS ARE EMERGING. THEY RECOGNIZE THE NEED TO ENSURE THE UNITED STATES IS CAPABLE OF DEALING WITH THE BREADTH OF THESE POTENTIAL THREATS.
- HISTORY PROVES THAT PREPARING FOR THE UNEXPECTED IS PRUDENT. IRAQ HAS USED CHEMICAL WEAPONS AGAINST IRAN AND ITS OWN PEOPLE. THOSE BEHIND THE WORLD TRADE CENTER BOMBING WERE ALSO PURSUING THE WHEREWITHAL FOR A CHEMICAL WEAPON THAT COULD HAVE KILLED THOUSANDS.
- IN SHORT, WE MUST BE PREPARED TO RESPOND TO ANY THREAT AGAINST OUR CITIZENS AND OUR NATIONAL INTERESTS...AND WE ARE.
- THAT'S A QUICK SUMMARY OF THE THREATS IN THE PACIFIC REGION. CLOSER TO HOME, LET'S LOOK AT YOUR MILITARY IN ALASKA TODAY -- WHO WE ARE, AND WHAT WE DO.

- YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED I SAID "YOUR" MILITARY. THAT'S BECAUSE THESE PROFESSIONAL AND DEDICATED MEN AND WOMEN DON'T WORK JUST FOR ME. THEY SERVE EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU... AND ALL OF YOUR CONSTITUENTS. IN ESSENCE, YOU ARE THE BENEFICIARIES OF OUR SERVICE AND THEY ARE YOUR ARMED FORCES.

MILITARY IMPACT ON ALASKA

- WITH 20,000 ACTIVE DUTY, RESERVE AND GUARD TROOPS SERVING IN ALASKA, THE MILITARY IS THE SINGLE LARGEST EMPLOYER IN THE STATE.
- ADD THE NEARLY 30,000 FAMILY MEMBERS, 8,000 RETIREES, 5,000 CIVIL SERVANTS AND 55,000 VETERANS AND YOU'RE LOOKING AT A CONSIDERABLE SEGMENT OF THE POPULATION. WHAT YOU MAY NOT REALIZE IS HOW THAT TRANSLATES INTO DOLLARS AND CENTS.
- IN FACT, THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BRINGS A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF FUNDS TO THE STATE--MORE THAN ONE BILLION DOLLARS IS IN MILITARY PAYROLL ALONE.
- LET ME GIVE YOU SOME SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF OTHER WAYS THE MILITARY BOOSTS THE ALASKA ECONOMY...
- LAST YEAR IN SITKA, WE CONTRACTED FOR MORE THAN A HALF MILLION DOLLARS IN SERVICES DURING NORTHERN EDGE, OUR PREMIER, JOINT TRAINING EXERCISE --A REAL BOON FOR THAT COMMUNITY. THIS YEAR, THE MARITIME PORTION OF NORTHERN EDGE WILL TAKE PLACE IN KETCHIKAN IN MARCH.
 - WHILE WE ARE ON THE SUBJECT, I'D LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO INVITE YOU ALL TO OBSERVE THIS PORTION OF NORTHERN EDGE DURING OUR "VIP DAY" SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 21. WE'LL GET THE PARTICULARS TO YOU LATER, BUT I JUST WANT TO MENTION IT NOW FOR PLANNING PURPOSES. I HOPE YOUR SCHEDULE WILL PERMIT YOUR ATTENDANCE...IT WILL BE A DAY WELL SPENT!
- IN FAIRBANKS, PACIFIC AIR FORCE CONDUCTS AN EXERCISE KNOWN AS "COPE THUNDER," WHICH IS HELD UP TO FOUR TIMES A YEAR. THIS REALISTIC, 10-DAY AIR COMBAT TRAINING EXERCISE CHALLENGES AIRCREWS IN EVERY CONCEIVABLE WAY.
- GENERALLY SPEAKING, IN A PERIOD OF 60 DAYS TOTAL TRAINING, ABOUT \$2 MILLION DOLLARS MAKES ITS WAY INTO THE NORTH

POLE/FAIRBANKS COMMUNITIES. AND LAST YEAR, MORE THAN 2,000 PEOPLE DEPLOYED TO COPE THUNDER FACILITIES IN THE FAIRBANKS AREA.

- BUT OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH ALASKA IS MUCH MORE THAN THE FINANCIAL. WE HAVE A RICH HERITAGE TOGETHER.
- IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING, WE'VE GROWN UP TOGETHER. IN FACT, ONE IN FIVE ALASKANS HAS SOME SORT OF MILITARY TIE—WHETHER IT'S A VETERAN, FAMILY MEMBER OR FRIEND. IN THE ANCHORAGE BOWL THAT RATIO CLIMBS TO ONE IN THREE.
- AND IT'S PROBABLY NO SURPRISE TO YOU THAT ALASKA IS ONE OF THE MOST SOUGHT AFTER ASSIGNMENTS IN THE MILITARY.
- AS I MENTIONED, A SIZEABLE NUMBER OF THOSE WHO SERVE HERE CHOOSE TO REMAIN...OR RETURN TO ALASKA AFTER THEIR MILITARY CAREER. THESE WELL-TRAINED, HIGHLY SKILLED CITIZENS THEN GO ON TO SERVE THEIR COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBORS IN A DIFFERENT MANNER.
 - SOME NOTABLE EXAMPLES...
 - MANY OF YOU KNOW MARK HAMILTON, THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA. MARK IS A PROVEN LEADER WHO HAS MADE AND WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE CONSIDERABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION IN ALASKA. HE IS ALSO A RETIRED, ARMY MAJOR GENERAL
 - AND AS YOU WELL KNOW, FORMER GOVERNOR BILL SHEFFIELD IS RETIRING AS PRESIDENT OF ALASKA RAILROAD. RETIRING GENERAL PAT GAMBLE, WHO IS COMMANDER OF ALL PACIFIC AIR FORCES, HAS BEEN CHOSEN TO SUCCEED HIM.
 - AND ANCHORAGE MAYOR GEORGE WEURCH, IS A DECORATED MARINE CORP RETIRED OFFICER.
 - OF COURSE THERE ARE A MULTITUDE OF OTHER EXAMPLES, BUT I THINK YOU GET WHAT I'M DRIVING AT.
- SO THAT'S WHO WE ARE— AND I GUARANTEE YOU THAT SOME OF THE 118,000 PEOPLE I JUST TALKED ABOUT LIVE IN YOUR DISTRICT. CLEARLY, WE WILL ALWAYS HAVE A MUTUAL CONCERN FOR THE FUTURE OF ALASKA.
- LET ME TURN NOW TO WHAT YOUR MILITARY IS DOING TODAY...AND LAST MONTH WAS PARTICULARLY BUSY:

- THE AIR FORCE DEPLOYED AIRCRAFT AND SUPPORT PERSONNEL FROM THE 19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON AT ELMENDORF AFB TO KEFLAVICK, ICELAND, AS PART OF THE REGULAR AEROSPACE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE--OR "AEF"--ROTATION. THEY ARE DUE BACK IN MARCH.
- AND PEOPLE AND JETS FROM THE 12TH FIGHTER SQUADRON LEFT FOR INCIRLIK AIR BASE, TURKEY, IN SUPPORT OF NORTHERN WATCH TO ENFORCE THE NO-FLY ZONE OVER NORTHERN IRAQ.
- AND ASSETS FROM THROUGHOUT THE STATE TEAMED UP WITH ALASKA NORAD REGION IN SUPPORT OF OPERATION NORTHERN DENIAL --WITH FORCES DEPLOYING TO OUR FORWARD OPERATING LOCATIONS IN GALENA AND KING SALMON ENSURING THE SOVEREIGNTY OF ALASKAN AIR SPACE. THIS WAS IN RESPONSE TO RUSSIA CONDUCTING LONG-RANGE AVIATION TRAINING WITH THEIR BOMBER FORCE IN NORTHERN SIBERIA.
- ON THE ARMY SIDE OF THE HOUSE, UNITED STATES ARMY ALASKA IS SUPPORTING DEPLOYMENTS TO BOSNIA, SARAJEVO, AND EAST TIMOR. AND THEY HAVE MORE THAN A DOZEN SOLDIERS FROM CHARLIE COMPANY, 84TH ENGINEER BATTALION, ON KOSRAE ISLAND IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC, INVOLVED IN THE CINC'S EXPANDED RELATIONS PROGRAM. THEIR MISSION IS TO HELP REPAIR CIVIL INFRASTRUCTURE.
- AND THE ALASKA NATIONAL GUARD... I KNOW MAJOR GENERAL PHIL OATES TALKED WITH MANY OF YOU ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES OF HIS FOLKS, BUT I'D LIKE TO HIGHLIGHT THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE 210TH RESCUE SQUADRON, WHICH WRAPPED UP LAST FISCAL YEAR WITH 78 TOTAL MISSIONS, 66 LIVES SAVED AND 20 ASSISTS. THE RESCUE COORDINATION CENTER ORCHESTRATED MORE THAN 200 SEARCHES AND SAVED 117 LIVES OVERALL.
- AND OF COURSE THE COAST GUARD...ALASKA'S NAVAL COMPONENT, HEADQUARTERED RIGHT HERE IN JUNEAU MAINTAINS AN OPERATIONS TEMPO THAT IS EQUALLY IMPRESSIVE. AS THE GUARDIANS OF ALASKA'S WATERWAYS THEY SAVED A LIFE EVERY 36 HOURS -- AVERAGING MORE THAN TWO SEARCH AND RESCUE MISSIONS A DAY--AND SECURED MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN PROPERTY.
- FROM A STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE, WE IN ALASKAN COMMAND FOCUS ON BEING READY FOR CONTINGENCIES AS WELL AS THE DAY-TO-DAY MISSIONS AND THIS INCLUDES THROUGHPUT AND MILITARY SUPPORT TO CIVIL AUTHORITIES.

THROUGHPUT

- BY THROUGHPUT I MEAN EXPEDITING THE DEPLOYMENT OF FORCES FROM AND THROUGH ALASKA IN SUPPORT OF WORLDWIDE CONTINGENCIES. IN OTHER WORDS, WE WOULD SERVE AS A LOGISTICAL HUB IN THE MOVEMENT OF TROOPS AND RESOURCES.
- OUR OBLIGATION FOR THIS MISSION REVOLVES AROUND INFRASTRUCTURE—TO MAKE SURE IT'S A WELL-OILED MACHINE. THIS MEANS FINDING EFFICIENCIES IN EVERY AREA RANGING FROM FUEL ACQUISITION, TRANSPORT, AND STORAGE TO HOW THE CIVIL RESERVE AIR FLEET (CRAF) IS SUPPORTED AT THE TED STEVENS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO CIVIL AUTHORITIES

- MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO CIVIL AUTHORITIES IS ABOUT SERVING OUR FELLOW ALASKANS DURING EMERGENCIES.
- NATURAL DISASTERS, TERRORIST ACTS AND OTHER CRISES CAN CREATE HAVOC AND CHAOS THAT CAN OVERWHELM LOCAL AND STATE CAPABILITIES.
- AND WHILE WE ARE NOT THE FIRST RESPONDERS, WE WILL WORK CLOSELY WITH EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCIES TO LEND A HAND. I WANT TO ASSURE YOU, THIS IS A MAJOR OBLIGATION AND IT IS ONE WE TAKE SERIOUSLY.

NORTHERN EDGE

- I ALLUDED TO NORTHERN EDGE EARLIER. EACH YEAR THIS EXERCISE CHALLENGES THOUSANDS OF SOLDIERS, SAILORS, AIRMEN, MARINES AND COASTGUARDSMEN AS THEY HONE THEIR WAR FIGHTING SKILLS AND IMPROVE UNIT READINESS.
- NORTHERN EDGE HAS BEEN AROUND FOR AWHILE, IN DIFFERENT FORMS AND UNDER DIFFERENT NAMES. IN FACT, EARLIER IN MY CAREER, I PARTICIPATED IN WHAT WAS THEN CALLED "BRIM FROST," AS A SQUADRON COMMANDER. THE REASON I SHARE THAT IS BECAUSE, BASED ON RECENT BUDGET DECISIONS, THE EXERCISE WILL CONTINUE WELL INTO THE FUTURE.
- OUR FOCUS WILL CHANGE OVER TIME AS EACH OF THE FORCES BECOMES MORE EXPEDITIONARY AND WE TRAIN TO BEST SUPPORT PACIFIC COMMAND'S EMERGING OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS.

OPERATION ALASKA ROAD

- IN SOUTHEAST ALASKA WE ARE THE EXECUTIVE AGENT FOR OPERATION ALASKAN ROAD, ONE OF DOD'S LARGEST INNOVATIVE READINESS TRAINING PROGRAM ACTIVITIES—TO THE TUNE OF \$12.5 MILLION DOLLARS ANNUALLY.
- WE ARE BUILDING A 14-MILE MAIN SUPPLY ROUTE ON ANNETTE ISLAND BETWEEN THE VILLAGE OF METLAKATLA AND THE PROPOSED NEW FERRY TERMINAL. AND IN THE PROCESS SERVICE MEMBERS, MANY OF THEM FROM RESERVE COMPONENTS OUTSIDE OF ALASKA, ARE RECEIVING UNPRECEDENTED TRAINING THAT DIRECTLY IMPROVES THEIR COMBAT READINESS.
- ABSENT A HICCUP IN FUNDING, THIS PROGRAM WILL CONTINUE UNTIL WE COMPLETE OUR PORTION OF THE PROJECT IN ABOUT FIVE YEARS.

ARCTIC SAREX

- FOR THE PAST SEVEN YEARS, ALASKAN COMMAND HAS PARTICIPATED IN A COMBINED SEARCH AND RESCUE EXERCISE WITH RUSSIA AND CANADA.
- IN AUGUST, A DELEGATION OF 14 MILITARY PROFESSIONALS FROM THE ACTIVE DUTY, GUARD AND RESERVE TRAVELED TO SAINT PETERSBURG, RUSSIA, TO PARTICIPATE IN ARCTIC SAREX.
- THE THREE COUNTRIES HAVE MUTUAL INTEREST IN ARCTIC SEARCH AND RESCUE AS WE ALL EXPERIENCE THE SAME HAZARDS ASSOCIATED WITH LIFE IN THE NORTHERN POLAR REGION OF THE WORLD.
- DURING THE EXERCISE WE SHARED INFORMATION ABOUT RESCUE PROCEDURES IN AN AUSTERE AND CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENT, AND IN THE PROCESS LEARNED A GREAT DEAL ABOUT EACH OTHER'S CAPABILITIES.
- THIS YEAR, AS IN 1997, ARCTIC SAREX WILL TAKE PLACE IN ALASKA AND WE WILL HOST OUR INTERNATIONAL GUESTS ONCE AGAIN.
- SO THERE YOU HAVE IT. THAT'S A QUICK GLIMPSE OF WHAT YOUR ALASKAN MILITARY IS DOING. THAT'S A LOOK AT TODAY, BUT WE ARE ALSO LOOKING FORWARD...WHERE WE SHARE MUTUAL INTERESTS IN OUR PROGRESS.

- LAND MOBILE RADIO

- IN 1997 ALASKAN COMMAND ENGAGED IN A COOPERATIVE EFFORT WITH

THE STATE AND THE ALASKA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A STATEWIDE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CAPABILITY BETWEEN FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL PUBLIC SAFETY RESPONDERS, THAT WOULD RESOLVE THE PERSISTENT INABILITY TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY IN EMERGENCIES.

- THE COOPERATIVE'S FINAL GOAL IS FOR LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL OFFICIALS TO USE ONE RADIO SYSTEM THAT CAN TALK WITH EACH OTHER WHEN THEY WORK TOGETHER IN EMERGENCY RESPONSE EFFORTS. IT WILL ALSO HELP REDUCE EACH AGENCY'S SYSTEM'S COSTS BY SHARING INFRASTRUCTURE
- THIS EFFORT IS THE FIRST OF ITS KIND AND, AS SUCH, WE ARE TURNING NEW GROUND. I AM CONFIDENT WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR GOAL OF A SEAMLESS INTEROPERABLE SYSTEM, ULTIMATELY SAVING LIVES AND PROPERTY.
- THAT GIVES YOU SOME IDEA OF THE CURRENT, DAY-TO-DAY ACTIONS INVOLVING YOUR MILITARY IN ALASKA. BUT, NEW CHALLENGES, IMPROVED TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATIVE APPROACHES DEMAND OUR ATTENTION AS ALL OF US PLAN AND PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE.

MODERNIZATION

- WE MUST MAKE SURE ALASKAN BASED FORCES REMAIN AT THE FOREFRONT OF READINESS. TO DO THAT WE ARE STAYING ENGAGED ON MAJOR DOD MODERNIZATION PROGRAMS.
- AMONG THE THINGS WE ARE FOLLOWING ARE THE AIR FORCE'S MODERNIZATION EFFORTS--THE F-22, C-17 AND JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER; THE ARMY'S FIELDING OF A MEDIUM WEIGHT FORCE; AND OF COURSE NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE.
- ALLOW ME TO TOUCH ON EACH OF THESE BRIEFLY...
- THE F-22 RAPTOR--IT'S A STEALTHY, HIGH PERFORMANCE, TOP-OF-THE-LINE FIGHTER AIRCRAFT WHICH WILL REPLACE THE F-15. BY THE TIME WE GET OUR FIRST WINGS OF F-22S ON BOARD, THE AVERAGE AGE OF THE F-15 WILL BE 25 YEARS.
- THE F-22 IS BUILT FOR THE THREAT OF THE FUTURE AND WILL ENSURE AIR SUPREMACY AND FREEDOM OF ACTION ON THE BATTLEFIELD FOR AT LEAST THE NEXT 30 YEARS.
- OUR STRATEGIC AIRLIFT CAPABILITY IS UNDER RESOURCED. PROCUREMENT OF ADDITIONAL C-17 GLOBEMASTERS WILL ALLEVIATE

THAT SHORTCOMING, AND PROVIDES THE MEANS TO RAPIDLY MOVE TROOPS AND EQUIPMENT AROUND THE GLOBE.

- THE AIR FORCE'S AGING CARGO FLEET IS PLACING INCREASING DEMANDS ON OUR MAINTAINERS. THE BOTTOM LINE IS THAT WE DO NOT CURRENTLY HAVE SUFFICIENT ASSETS TO DO THE JOB OF ASSURING THE STRATEGIC RESPONSIVENESS OF U.S. FORCES, NOR DO THEY MEET RELIABILITY STANDARDS.
- THE C-17, WITH ITS LEADING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY AND VERY SUBSTANTIAL LIFT CAPABILITIES IS THE SOLUTION.
- JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER -THE JSF PROGRAM WILL PROVIDE A HIGHLY CAPABLE, AFFORDABLE STRIKE FIGHTER FOR THE U.S. AIR FORCE, MARINE CORPS AND NAVY AS WELL AS OUR ALLIES. WITH ITS SHORT TAKE OFF AND VERTICAL LANDING AND OTHER FEATURES, IT OFFERS IMMENSE CAPABILITY AND VERSATILITY FOR THE SERVICES AND OUR ALLIES AND WOULD REPLACE THE F-16 AIRCRAFT NOW ASSIGNED AT EIELSON.
- SWITCHING TO GROUND FORCES...THE ARMY'S TRANSITION TO A MORE MOBILE, RESPONSIVE, MEDIUM FORCE IS IMMINENT.
- THEY HAVE THE WORLD'S FINEST LIGHT INFANTRY, BUT IT LACKS THE ADEQUATE LETHALITY, SURVIVABILITY AND MOBILITY ONCE IN THEATER. HEAVY FORCES ARE LETHAL AND SURVIVABLE, BUT THEY ARE DIFFICULT TO DEPLOY QUICKLY. THE ARMY IS WORKING TO CHANGE THAT.
- THIS NEW, OBJECTIVE FORCE WILL PROVIDE THEATER COMMANDERS A JOINT FORCE THAT CAN RESPOND QUICKLY AND PREVAIL ACROSS THE SPECTRUM OF OPERATIONS.

NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE

- EARLIER, I SPOKE ABOUT THE PROLIFERATION OF BALLISTIC MISSILE TECHNOLOGY. I'D LIKE TO DISCUSS NMD FOR A MINUTE AND TELL YOU WHERE IT STANDS.
- RIGHT NOW WE ARE AWAITING A DEPLOYMENT DECISION FROM THE NEW ADMINISTRATION, AND AS YOU PROBABLY KNOW THEY WILL CONSIDER SUCH THINGS AS THE THREAT, COST, TREATY IMPLICATIONS AND TECHNICAL FEASIBILITY IN MAKING THAT DECISION.
- CLEARLY, IF THE INTENTION IS TO PROTECT ALL 50 STATES THEN ALASKA WILL BE A PLAYER IN SOME FORM. IT HAS TO, BASED ON

PURE PHYSICS.

- LAST SEPTEMBER, THE PRESIDENTIAL DECISION SPECIFIED THAT DEPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES RELATING TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN X-BAND RADAR AT SHEMYA ISLAND, WOULD NOT BE AUTHORIZED UNTIL EFFECTIVENESS IS DEMONSTRATED IN THE TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT ASPECTS OF THE NMD PROGRAM, AND IN ACTUAL INTERCEPT TESTING.
- THE PRESIDENT DID AUTHORIZE THE CONTINUATION OF A ROBUST RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING PROGRAM TO VALIDATE THE NMD TECHNOLOGY, AND CONGRESS SUPPORTED THAT MANDATE.
- IN DECEMBER, THE BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE ORGANIZATION'S NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE JOINT PROGRAM OFFICE AWARDED A RESTRUCTURED COST-PLUS-AWARD-FEE CONTRACT TO THE BOEING COMPANY FOR CONTINUING DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEM.
- IF A NEAR TERM DECISION IS MADE TO DEPLOY A LAND-BASED NMD SYSTEM THE INITIAL OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY WILL LIKELY BE IN 2005 OR 2006.
- THE BOTTOM LINE IS THAT WE ARE STANDING BY TO ASSIST THE PROJECT OFFICE AND IMPLEMENT THE CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP'S DECISION ON THE TIME LINE THEY SPECIFY.

BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE COMMISSION

- I KNOW THE SUBJECT OF "BRAC," OR BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE, IS ON A LOT OF PEOPLE'S MINDS.
- YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT THIS IS A NECESSARY THING, SORELY NEEDED THROUGHOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.
- HERE'S WHY ... THERE ARE ABOUT ONE POINT FOUR (1.4) MILLION PEOPLE SERVING IN THE MILITARY TODAY, DOWN FROM ALMOST 2.1 MILLION 10 YEARS AGO.
- THE FORCE IS ABOUT ONE THIRD SMALLER THAN IT WAS A DECADE AGO AND YET THERE WAS NOT A CORRESPONDING REDUCTION IN INFRASTRUCTURE.
- THE RESULT IS WE HAVE AIR BASES WITHOUT AIRPLANES, SHIP DOCKS WITH NO SHIPS, AND SO ON. AS BUSINESS PEOPLE YOU CAN APPRECIATE THAT EXCESS OVERHEAD CONSUMES RESOURCES THAT COULD BE BETTER USED ELSEWHERE.

- WE COULD INVEST THE SAVINGS IN CRITICAL NEED AREAS SUCH AS TRAINING, QUALITY OF LIFE INITIATIVES AND FACILITIES.
- THE QUESTION I AM OFTEN ASKED IS, "IS ALASKA VULNERABLE? AND THE ANSWER IS THE STATE IS CLEARLY NOT IMMUNE, BUT... WE CAN AND WILL MAKE A COMPELLING ARGUMENT FOR THE INSTALLATIONS AND MISSIONS HERE.
- AS YOU WELL KNOW, ALASKA HAS A LOT TO OFFER, AND WE CAN MAKE A STRONG CASE. I THINK THE COMMISSION WOULD RECOGNIZE—AS THE DOD ALREADY DOES—ALASKA'S STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE AND ITS LONG TERM POTENTIAL FOR THE NATIONAL DEFENSE.
- AND REGARDLESS OF YOUR FEELING ABOUT BRAC, YOU MUST ACKNOWLEDGE THAT UNNEEDED INFRASTRUCTURE ACROSS THE DOD DIVERTS THE RESOURCES WE NEED TO SUPPORT ENDURING INSTALLATIONS. AND I WOULD ASK ALL OF YOU TO SUPPORT DOD'S REQUEST FOR CONTINUING BRAC LEGISLATION.
- LET ME CONCLUDE WITH TWO OR THREE ITEMS OF MUTUAL INTEREST.

NATIVE RELATIONS

- WHEN DEALING WITH NATIVE RELATIONS, ALASKAN COMMAND FOLLOWS THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE'S ALASKA NATIVE POLICY AND HAS DONE SO FOR SEVERAL YEARS.
- MEETING THE GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION REQUIREMENT IS OUR MANDATE. AND WE ARE MAKING PROGRESS.
- WE ARE WORKING INITIATIVES THAT:
- BETTER ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN OUR LONG TERM RELATIONSHIPS THAT ARE SO IMPORTANT TO SUCCESS, INCLUDING ESTABLISHING A FULL-TIME, CIVILIAN LIAISON POSITION.
- AT THE SAME TIME, WE ARE AGGRESSIVELY ADDRESSING ENVIRONMENTAL OVERSIGHTS OF THE PAST. AND WE'RE WORKING OPENLY AND CANDIDLY WITH COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE STATE.

EDUCATION IN ALASKA

- SPEAKING OF THE FUTURE, I AM SURE YOU WOULD AGREE THAT THE FUTURE OF OUR NATION IS IN THE HANDS OF OUR CHILDREN. IN THE MILITARY, WE HAVE A SAYING, "WE RECRUIT SOLDIERS, BUT RETAIN

FAMILIES." CLEARLY WE IN ALASKAN COMMAND MUST PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN SUPPORT OF OUR FAMILIES.

- THIS WEEKEND, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE STATE PARENT -TEACHERS ASSOCIATION AND THE ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, WE ARE HOSTING A "MILITARY EDUCATION FORUM" IN ANCHORAGE TO ADDRESS ISSUES AND CONCERNS OF MILITARY PARENTS.
- KIDS DESERVE THE BEST IN EDUCATION ...
 - A BALANCED AND VALUABLE CURRICULUM
 - HIGH, BUT ATTAINABLE STANDARDS
 - AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXCEL AND PURSUE HIGHER EDUCATION
- ALL OF WHICH WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR VALUE AS CITIZENS AND FUTURE LEADERS.
- JUST AS ALASKA IS A UNIQUE ENVIRONMENT, MILITARY CHILDREN HAVE UNIQUE CONCERNS, IN LARGE PART IT IS DUE TO THE FREQUENT RELOCATION OF THEIR PARENTS.
- AMONG THEIR CONCERNS ARE TRANSFERS OF CREDITS BETWEEN SCHOOLS, GRADING SYSTEMS, GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS, AND ELIGIBILITY FOR EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.
- THE POINT I WANT TO MAKE IS THAT STATE AND LOCAL DECISIONS IN EDUCATION MUST CONSIDER THE NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS OF MILITARY CHILDREN, JUST AS YOU MUST FOR THE LARGER COMMUNITY OF ALASKA STUDENTS.
- CLEARLY, THERE'S A LOT WE CAN DO FOR OUR CHILDREN AS WE WORK TOGETHER ON THEIR BEHALF
- WE COVERED A LOT OF GROUND TODAY TALKING ABOUT THE WORLD SITUATION; ALASKA'S MILITARY FORCES, AND A BIT ABOUT THE FUTURE. WHEN I STARTED THIS DISCUSSION, I ALSO PROMISED TO TALK ABOUT HOW YOU CAN PLAY AND INFLUENCE THE ACTION. AND HERE IT IS...

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY/CONCLUSION

- IT'S EASY TO SEE THAT THE MILITARY PRESENCE IN ALASKA IS SIGNIFICANT ... SIX MAJOR MILITARY INSTALLATIONS, 74 NATIONAL GUARD ARMORIES, 44 COAST GUARD STATIONS, MORE THAN A DOZEN RADAR SITES, TWO FORWARD OPERATING LOCATIONS, NUMEROUS AIRFIELDS, EXTENSIVE TRAINING RANGES... THE LIST GOES ON.

- CHANCES ARE, IN SOME FORM OR FASHION, THERE ARE PEOPLE, EQUIPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE OR SOME COMBINATION OF THE PRECEDING IN YOUR DISTRICT.
- I WOULD ENCOURAGE YOU TO FIND OUT WHAT IS IN YOUR "AOR" OR AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY AS WE CALL IT, AND WORK TO UNDERSTAND IT. THIS IS THE BEST WAY FOR YOU TO INFLUENCE THE RECRUITING AND RETENTION ISSUES ALL THE SERVICES ARE CURRENTLY FACING. TALK TO THE MEN AND WOMEN IN UNIFORM; FIND OUT WHAT THEY ARE DOING; ASK THEM THEIR PERSPECTIVE ON THINGS. YOUR INTERACTION WILL SHOW SUPPORT AND INTEREST IN WHAT THEY DO.
- KEEP IN MIND THEY WORK FOR YOU...AND YOUR CONSTITUENTS -THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. TOGETHER, WE CAN SECURE AND ENHANCE ALASKA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE NATIONAL DEFENSE.
- OUR FUNDAMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY IS TO MAINTAIN CLOSE TIES WITH THE BENEFICIARIES OF WHAT WE DO...YOU.
- AND THAT IS WHY I AM HERE TODAY. TO SHARE WITH YOU OUR ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY AND ENCOURAGE YOU TO ENGAGE WITH THE MILITARY AS WELL.
 - TO GET TO KNOW US BETTER, TO APPRECIATE THE BURDENS OUR YOUNG PEOPLE CARRY AND TO HELP US IN WAYS LARGE AND SMALL TO PROMOTE THE NOBILITY OF PUBLIC SERVICE, AND THE PROFOUND OBLIGATIONS THAT FLOW FROM PROVIDING FOR THE COMMON DEFENSE.
- WITH THAT, I WILL BE HAPPY TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE.

CO-CHAIRMAN MULDER thanked Lt. General Schwartz then said that before any question were posed, he would like to introduce several people in the audience. Major General Phil Oates, the Commissioner of Military and Veterans Affairs was recognized first, next he recognized Brigadier General George Cannelos, head of the Alaska Air National Guard, and then Brigadier General Steve Korenek, head of the Alaska Army National Guard.

Number 833

SENATOR LEMAN had the first question. He said that he had been privileged to represent Elmendorf Air Force Base for the last nine years, three of which he shared with Representative Murkowski. He said that he was pleased with the military civilian relationship

and that some of the programs mentioned, such as Northern Edge, were very beneficial. He is particularly pleased with the Honorary Commanders Program at Elmendorf.

SENATOR LEMAN is concerned with the issue of voting on military installations. In Alaska, this opportunity has always been provided and the Division of Elections has done an excellent job in making sure the opportunity exists. However, a directive from the Department of Defense (DoD) has threatened to eliminate this opportunity. He has introduced legislation requesting that this directive be rescinded and asked General Schwartz for his perspective from an Alaskan standpoint and its affect on other states.

LT. GENERAL SCHWARTZ said that the directive from DoD was clearly laid out, that poling stations on military installations were not to be supported. He felt that the only way for this to change would be through legislative exception. He recommended that, in those places where it clearly made sense to have a poling place, Congress should be encouraged to enable installations within DoD to allow them. As always boundaries would be set so that the polling stations are the requisite distance from any location where uniformed military might be carrying weapons.

Individual commanders are not able to make exceptions; the change must come from a DoD exception or Congressional action. It is his view that DoD is unlikely to change its view without encouragement from Congress.

CO-CHAIR MULDER recognized Senator Pearce, pointing out her recent appointment to the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS).

Number 868

REPRESENTATIVE MURKOWSKI asked for elaboration on upgrades on C-17s and how it ties into training grounds.

LT. GENERAL SCHWARTZ replied that Alaska's major asset, in terms of air-space maneuverable areas and excellent training grounds, is well known throughout the department. The dilemma is that moving forces to Alaska to train is expensive. Transportation costs are a liability for most assets coming to Alaska. He feels that a significant advantage that a C-17 unit in Alaska would provide is the opportunity to bring units from the Lower 48, the West Coast, or other areas in the western Pacific to avail themselves of the marvelous opportunities here. The C-17 is a strategic air-lifter that can lift large quantities of material long distances and that

is a plus for the state. In addition to bringing people here to train, there is the fact that the Army is thinking about placing one of its medium weight force brigades in Alaska.

He asked the audience to think about "the synergy of a medium weight brigade, C-17s, the third and 354th wings. This is a force projection capability in Alaska, sovereign U.S. territories that can touch people in the Pacific Region. The force disposition in the Pacific will likely change over time. Assets that were once based in the western Pacific may well migrate back to U.S. bastions such as Alaska, which bodes well for the state."

Number 900

CO-CHAIR MULDER spoke to the base realignment and closure (BRAC) issue saying that the greatest drawbacks Alaskan posts have are costs. He asked for advice on changing the criteria for closure to more adequately address strategic value of power projection and maneuver area, which is in short supply in the Lower 48. Cost shouldn't be the only determining criteria.

LT. GENERAL SCHWARTZ said that the criteria that the BRAC commission must use to measure installations are a product of public law. The way that law is written will determine the value assigned to the attributes of the installations around the U.S. For training and strategic access to be weighted higher than certain cost factors there is an obligation to communicate that to those in Congress who write the legislation. In this way, the criteria could be embodied in the legislation.

Although there is no question that cost is a factor, it is his view that strategic considerations will begin to prevail. BRAC was started in 1991 and the focus was to shrink the force. The motivation was less about strategic posture and more on the peace dividend. The setting is different now, ten years later, and he thinks that America's strategic posture is considered to be at least as important, if not more so, than the cost considerations.

Number 887

CO-CHAIR WILKEN said that the Expeditionary Forces initiative was set forth three or four years previous by the joint chiefs. Alaska was a beneficiary of the initiative and he wondered whether it was still an active initiative being promoted by the joint chiefs.

LT. GENERAL SCHWARTZ said yes but that it takes a number of different forms such as how the services interact with other services. He gave an example of the non-combatant evacuation from

Phnum Penh in 1997. The army, marines and others worked jointly on that operation just as they are carried out today.

In established theatres such as Korea, it is different, but clearly, on the contingency side, whether it is in response to a terrorist act, humanitarian act, an emergency operation or a Kosovo activity it will be executed as a joint task force. Joint task force activity is the way business is conducted today.

CO-CHAIR MULDER noted that Alex Spector, Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs, was in the audience and had been asked to give a brief rundown on VA activities slated for Alaska.

SENATOR PHILLIPS said that he has been working with the Fort Richardson post commander and General Phil Oates to get permission to fly a POW MIA flag alongside the American flag at the Glen Highway monument to service men and women. He asked for any help General Schwartz could give to get permission to fly this flag.

SENATOR PHILLIPS also wanted information on the North American Aerospace Defense Command mission function.

Number 852

LT. GENERAL SCHWARTZ said that Operation Northern Denali was such a mission. He has two F-15s and one KC-35 tanker on alert and available to him at any time. The F-15's are typically on alert in the alert facility at Elmendorf and the tanker comes from Eielson. That is the current alert package for maintaining Alaskan air sovereignty. When Russians begin to move bombers around, as they have been this week, a determination is made for the potential to penetrate Alaskan air space. Just before the last Christmas holidays, there were three airplanes at King Salmon, three airplanes at Galena, six tankers at Eielson, and two E-3 radar aircraft at Elmendorf. There was legitimate concern that the Russians were going to do "out of area" flight. There is currently training activity going on in northern Siberia but the assessment is that they are not going to be provocative.

SENATOR PHILLIPS asked how many Canadian pilots are stationed at bases here.

GENERAL SCHWARTZ said there are 36 Canadians at Elmendorf Air Force Base.

Number 831

CO-CHAIR MULDER thanked General Schwartz for his address and said that the closer the bond between the military and the legislature, the better military individuals and their families will be represented.

CO-CHAIR MULDER introduced Alex Spector, Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

MR. ALEX SPECTOR wanted to round out the picture regarding what legislators do for veterans on the state level in working with the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs in Alaska. The Veteran Affairs medical and benefits budget for Alaska is about \$70 million. In addition, they provide about \$70 million in benefits to veterans in Alaska. This money is paid directly to the veteran and is money that stays in Alaska.

15 percent of all veterans in Alaska receive some sort of compensation, which is the highest in the nation. There are about 70,000 veterans in the state and about 11,500 veterans take advantage of their medical services.

Alaska VA services require a partnership with the state. In the area of medical care, there are several critical care sites in the state. The main primary care facility is in Anchorage near Alaska Regional Hospital. It provides primary care, a small amount of specialty care, mental health services and is the regional office for benefits.

The joint venture hospital with the Air Force is another clinical care site. The VA contributed \$11 million to the construction of the hospital building at Elmendorf and runs the intensive care unit. There is also a joint governance of the facility. It is recognized as one of the better partnerships.

Number 963

Another clinical care site is the homeless domiciliary facility in Anchorage that provides rehabilitation services for homeless veterans. There is a continuum of care for homeless veterans starting with a storefront where homeless veterans can go to get a helping hand to change their situation. From there they could go to a domiciliary and spend from 90 days up to a year in the program. Next they move to a halfway house and then to their own houses with vouchers for rent payment. At this point they are reintegrated into the community.

The VA partners with Anchorage's Stand Down program. Homeless veterans are given two days where they can stand down from the

harsh street environment and get showers, telephone facilities provided by AT&T, medical and dental care and legal assistance.

In Fairbanks, there is a small outpatient facility at Fort Wainwright in partnership with the Army. They are in the process of increasing services in that area with mental health services having already seen an increase.

There is a proposed clinical care site in the Kenai Soldotna area. Congress has approved this for two nurses and a physician. It is anticipated that about 1,000 patients will be served in that clinic location.

There is the Alaska Federal Healthcare Partnership made up of the Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, VA and Indian Health Service. This is nationally recognized as successful partnering with federal entities. Along with the partnership, they were able to secure about \$38 million for a federal telemedicine project in the state. It is the largest telemedicine project in the world and connects 235 Alaskan sites.

The Alaskan VA is ready to submit an application to headquarters and then to Congress to construct a new outpatient clinic in Anchorage, next to the Elmendorf hospital on the base. It will be a \$25-40 million project with construction in 2004.

Finally, there is a partnership with Laddie Shaw, Veterans Affairs coordinator, and General Oates to designate pioneer homes as pioneer/state homes. There are some federal funds available for construction/renovation.

Veteran Affairs is proud of the VA services offered in Alaska and is looking forward to a visit by the new Secretary of the Veterans Administration, Tony Principe, the weekend of February 16.

CO-CHAIR MULDER said that there is a meeting scheduled with Secretary Principe on Friday afternoon, February 16, and anyone wanting to attend should contact Representative Murkowski.

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN asked, "On this veterans home into the existing home/state, - is this going to be voluntary or mandatory?"

MR. SPECTOR said that it would be voluntary; there would be an application process and some sort of eligibility criteria that has yet to be developed.

REPRESENTATIVE MURKOWSKI asked how many Alaskan veterans take advantage of the partnered medical facilities offered to them throughout the state.

MR. SPECTOR said that she was referring to the community nursing home program where veterans are funded to be seen at the skilled nursing home level. They see a statewide average of ten veterans per day in this program. The stay is usually between 30 and 90 days as a transition to Medicaid is made. There are a few veterans qualified for long-term care where payment goes directly to the nursing home, not to the veteran. The skilled nursing home level is a higher level of care than current pioneer home care.

CO-CHAIR MULDER thought perhaps a larger outreach program to state veterans would be beneficial. He then thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 4:50 p.m.