fundamental issues facing our Nation. Our report challenged not just Government but our schools, our businesses and our parents to take the steps needed to secure a prosperous future for our Nation. We laid out a plan of action to get our fiscal house in order; to raise our level of national savings and our level of public and private investment in both physical and human capital; and to improve the way Washington works.

It is with great pleasure that I end my Senate career with a public thank you to a man who has contributed so much to U.S. national security and foreign policy and to me personally, David Abshire. I wish David, his wife Carolyn, and his family all the best.●

GRAZING OPERATIONS IN GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK

● Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I rise to express my desire to work with the National Park Service to address the issue of open space in the Teton Valley and its interrelationship with grazing in Grand Teton National Park. Since establishment of the park in 1950, a limited number of local ranchers, who had grazing privileges within the boundaries of Grand Teton Park before its establishment, have been allowed to continue to graze within the area. These grazing permits were given for the life of the designated heirs of the permit holders who were local ranchers that required the summer range to maintain their ranches.

This arrangement has not only benefitted the ranch families involved, but helped support the ecology in the park and preserved open space in Jackson Valley for visitors to this unique region. Unfortunately, in the past few years, both of the designed heirs to these grazing permits have died. Although both families have expressed their interest in continuing to ranch in Jackson Valley, the Park Service may be forced to terminate these grazing permits unless a reasonable solution can be found. Without the summer range available in the park, these ranchers may be forced to end their operations and sell their ranches. If these ranches are sold, they would be immediately subdivided and developed and the open space provided by these areas would be gone forever.

It is an imperative environmental issue that we work to ensure that open space is preserved in and around Grand Teton National Park. This region is truly unique and it is vital for both the wildlife living in and around the park and the environment throughout the region that open space is protected. Unless the ranchers are allowed to continue grazing in the park, the region will be threatened with development that will harm the wildlife and the ecology in and around the park.

In the coming months, the Wyoming congressional delegation plans to work with the National Park Service, the ranch families, the environmental community and local citizens to develop a solution to this situation. By working together, I am hopeful we can continue to protect the open space in this magnificent region and continue an activity that has been monitored and managed by the Park Service for over 45 years. Make no mistake about it, ending grazing operations in Grand Teton National Park will be harmful to park resources, wildlife in the area and will destroy open space for visitors to this outstanding region. I look forward to working with the National Park Service in the coming months to address this critical matter.●

MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE

● Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss an issue that has troubled me greatly over the years and has recently become an even greater problem as our Nation strives toward a balanced budget. This is the issue of the quality of life of our service men and women.

As a former enlisted sailor in the Navy, a commissioned officer in the Marine Corps, and Under Secretary and Secretary of the Navy, I have a particular empathy for our men and women in uniform. These men and women make sacrifices every day, throughout their careers, in defense of our nation. However, the pay and benefits that they receive, which in some cases are woefully inadequate, are constantly under attack by people and organizations that are too focused on the bottom-line and not on the morale and readiness of our Armed Forces. It is for this reason that I, as a senior member of the Armed Services Committee, sleep with one eye open in order to protect the benefits which our service members and veterans have earned through loyal and patriotic service to our Nation.

I have worked hard, together with my colleagues on the Armed Services Committee, to provide increased funding to improve the quality of life of our Armed Forces. In particular, we have been concerned about the lack of adequate funding for the maintenance of military housing. Many of our service members and their families are forced to live in substandard housing. In testimony before the Armed Services Committee this year, Department of Defense officials testified that a full 80 percent of military housing falls below Department of Defense standards. The result of years of diverting maintenance funds to other requirements is military housing units with leaky plumbing, flaking paint and broken appliances. Our service members deserve better!

That is why I was so concerned to see two articles in the most recent editions of the Navy and Army Times which describe further inequities for our service members in the area of military housing. I ask unanimous consent that these articles be printed in the RECORD.

The first article concerns a report by the General Accounting Office, dated September 17, 1996, which recommends that military families should begin paying rent for living in Government quarters. The report suggests that the rental payments are not primarily to raise money from military families, but to treat all service members equally whether they live on or off base. It is unfortunate that GAO's recommended solution to fix what they perceive to be an inequity is to raise the out-of-pocket expenses of the families living on-base, rather than increase the housing allowances to an adequate level for those living off-base. GAO's first response is to cut benefits to our Armed Forces.

I was pleased to see that the Pentagon opposes this idea. I will work with my colleagues on the Armed Services Committee to ensure that this GAO recommendation is not adopted.

The second article concerns a recent ruling by the General Accounting Office that a service member who is required to move because of renovation or construction of their base housing, is not eligible for a dislocation allowance to cover the expenses of that move. This is an issue of basic fairness. How can the Government, in good conscience, order a military service member to uproot and move his or her family and all of their possessions, but not pay the expenses of that move? This is another example of the constant attack on the benefits of our service members.

I will work with the Pentagon to try to find a solution to this problem. It is my understanding that the Pentagon had been paying service members a dislocation allowance for these moves prior to the GAO ruling. I am hopeful that a quick solution can be found so that service members will not have to bear the cost of these moves. If necessary, I will introduce legislation next year to correct this unfair practice.

Mr. President, it is time that we end this continuous assault on the quality of life of our Armed Forces. It is a question of fairness and respect for those that so selflessly serve our nation and defend the freedom that we all hold dear.

[From the Navy Times, Sept. 30, 1996]

PAYING RENT ON BASE? GOVERNMENT REPORT SAYS ALL SHOULD PAY

(By Rick Maze)

Military families should begin paying a modest rent for living in government quarters, according to a new congressional report.

The rental payments are being suggested not so much to raise money from military families as they are to treat all service members equally, whether they live on or off base.

But the underlying reason is that the rental payments would eliminate the attraction of living on base for many military members, and that would result in huge savings for the government

The ''rent'' would vary by rank and location, but would average $2,016 a year, according to the Sept. 17 General Accounting Office report. That is the same amount as the average out-of-pocket cost for service members with families living off base, whose housing