

members of the committee and to the members of the staff.

When Senator DODD and I were appointed, respectively, as vice chairman and chairman of this group, we made the determination we would not have a partisan staff. While it was partisan in the formal sense that there was a minority director and so on, it was housed in the same facility; the members of the staff were majority or minority and worked together on a daily basis. We had a number of detailees from a variety of agencies who came to us and brought a level of professional expertise we could never have achieved in any other way. We maintained throughout the entire exercise a determination to get the job done that was not interfered with by any attempt at staff bickering or posturing for any partisan purposes.

I pay tribute to Senator DODD for his willingness to join me and, indeed, for his leadership in pushing me in that direction, and to the people whom he appointed as minority members of the staff. I also pay tribute to the administration and John Koskinen, who held the position on behalf of the President. There, also, there was no partisanship and no posturing for any partisan advantage.

For the sake of the record, I want to read into the RECORD the names of the staffers who helped us with this accomplishment. They are: Robert Cresanti, staff director. Before being staff director, he worked with me on the Banking Committee to raise the initial alarm with respect to this possibility. T.M. Wilke Green, appointed by Senator DODD as minority staff director; John B. Stephenson, who came from the GAO, the deputy staff director. Then we had Thomas Bello, professional staff; Tania Calhoun, committee counsel; James P. Dailey, professional staff; Paul Hunter, professional staff—these people were absolutely magnificent in the degree of expertise and professionalism they brought to us—Unice Lieberman, minority press secretary; Sara Jane MacKay, legislative correspondent; Don Meyer, press secretary; J. Paul Nicholas, professional staff; Frank Reilly, professional staff; Noelle Busk Ringel, our archivist. The clerk was Amber Sechrist, who came out of my office in a very professional and solid way. We also had Ronald Spear, professional staff, and Deborah Steward, GPO representative.

To all of these men and women, I pay tribute and extend my warmest thanks and gratitude for the work they have done. Tomorrow, off the presses will come "Y2K Aftermath—Crisis Averted, Final Committee Report." With the issuance of this report, the committee no longer exists. But as Secretary Hamre, Chairman Greenspan, and others have said, the benefits of the committee will live on over and above whatever benefits we had for averting the crisis.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

COMMENDING THE Y2K SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I am pleased to have been here as Senator BENNETT presented his report. He does deserve the credit he has rightly claimed, and his committee has done its work very well. I am most pleased to be able to congratulate him for a job well done.

GENERAL JOE RALSTON

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, later today I will join Senators IONUYE, WARNER and LEVIN in hosting a reception to bid farewell to Joe and Dede Ralston, as General Ralston concludes his second tour as Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

Happily, this event does not signify General Ralston's retirement, but his advancement to the position of Supreme Allied Commander Europe, in charge of all NATO forces, and all U.S. Forces stationed in Europe.

Joe Ralston has pursued a career of firsts, and breakthrough leadership success. His assignment as the first Air Force officer to command NATO is typical, and indicative, of his tremendous talents, and force of personality.

Remarkably, Joe Ralston has achieved success in several distinct military disciplines over his career, spanning more than 34 years.

Joe Ralston's military career is founded in his experience as a combat and command pilot during the Vietnam war. During two combat tours, in F-105 fighters and F-105 wild weasel jets, Joe honed his warfighting skills.

In the 1980's and early 1990's General Ralston played a key role in the technological revolution in air warfare. While many of these programs are still very sensitive, the direct impact of General Ralston's service in technology development and acquisition played a prominent role in our victories in Desert Storm and Kosovo.

Moving into more senior leadership positions, General Ralston contributed to reorganization of the Air Force during his tenure as commander of the 11th Air Force, Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff of Plans and Operations and Commander of the Air Combat Command.

Most recently, General Ralston served with great distinction as Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

Over these past four years, General Ralston has left an indelible mark on our nation's military, now, and for many years ahead.

An architect of the 1997 Quadrennial Defense Review, General Ralston helped shape the force structure and training doctrine now followed by our Nation's Armed Forces.

The modernization plan presented in the QDR has moved us forward on recapitalizing our air and naval forces, and achieving Secretary Cohen's goal of \$60 billion for procurement for FY 2001.

These accomplishments proceeded during a period of overseas military activity across the globe unmatched since the end of the Second World War.

My colleagues here recognize that I have not always supported this administration's policies in the deployment of U.S. Forces overseas.

Regardless of how and why those deployments commenced, the performance and success of the U.S. military in these assignments reflects the leadership that General Ralston and all the Joint Chiefs have provided.

Looking ahead, to the continued opportunity for service General Ralston has accepted in moving to the Supreme Allied Commander job, this will be his toughest challenge.

General Ralston proceeds to Brussels following another great American Commander, General Wes Clark.

Having visited General Clark many times at his headquarters, and in the Balkans, there is no question that he provided the glue that held the alliance together in Bosnia and Kosovo.

General Clark did so facing limitations unlike those encountered by any previous alliance commander. He merits our accolades.

General Ralston succeeds General Clark in an era where our allies must decide the nature of their military forces in the future, and the role of Europe, compared to NATO, in future security matters.

To me, there is no officer in the U.S. military today better prepared, by experience or temperament, to accept this challenge.

While that is a strong claim, I make this comment to the Senate based on my personal experience in watching General Ralston command.

Catherine and I have known Joe and Dede Ralston since 1992, when they arrived in Alaska to take on the responsibility of commanding all U.S. military forces in my State.

Joe immediately established himself as not just a military commander, but a real Alaskan.

In fact, as Joe and Dede saw the close of this assignment as Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs approaching, they made plans to establish a home in Alaska—coming home as neighbors.

While disappointed that we cannot look forward to their imminent return to Alaska, I join all Alaskans in congratulating General Ralston on the successful conclusion of his tenure as Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and wishing him well as he proceeds to this next position of military and diplomatic responsibility.

I am confident that I can also speak for my colleagues here in the Senate in