

MANAGEMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 1983

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS,
Washington, D.C.

The committee met at 9:30 a.m., in room SD-342, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. William V. Roth, Jr. (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Roth, Coehn, Rudman, Levin, Sasser, and Bingaman.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR ROTH

Chairman ROTH. The committee will please be in order.

Mr. Thayer, I want to welcome you here this morning. We are pleased to have you and look forward to your testimony.

Today, the Committee on Governmental Affairs begins a series of hearings to review the management record of the Department of Defense.

I believe that these hearings are in the finest tradition of this committee, whose mandate is to examine the economy and efficiency of all Federal programs.

Let me say, at the outset, that I am concerned. I am concerned because the consensus for increased defense spending is being lost.

Time does not permit me to review some of the national polls that have been taken which reveal the erosion of the public's support for an increased commitment to our Nation's defenses.

I would just like to point out, however, that I recently sent to my people back home, to every household, a questionnaire covering many items, one of them being the need for increased defense spending. The results of that questionnaire show that 65 percent of the people in Delaware believe we are spending too much for defense, that it should be cut.

I think that is an important factor for you and other officials in the Pentagon responsible for its administration to recognize.

Let me point out, because I think it is important to understand the dimension of the problem, that we are asking the typical American family this year to spend \$750 of their family budget for defense programs. That \$750 is a \$90 increase over last year, and it represents a sizable factor in the typical family budget of \$25,000 a year.

I think we have here a problem of trust. I happen to believe that the public, while they are skeptical and have very serious problems