

maintains the integrity in the expenditure of public funds by ensuring that government contracts are awarded on the basis of merit rather than favoritism.

I look forward today to questioning our witnesses about how we can expand the use of competitive contracting, improve the accuracy of cost estimation, and institute other management reforms in defense procurement.

Chairman ROTH. Thank you.
Senator Bingaman?

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR BINGAMAN

Senator BINGAMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me just say a few things about the subject of today's hearing, and I want to first compliment the chairman for scheduling the hearing. I think that getting some information on DOD management and the way that management has performed is of major concern to a great many people in the country. This is an area on which Congress needs to try to do a better job.

There are three areas that have occurred to me in hearing the discussions both here and in the Armed Services Committee that I want to mention, briefly. I am sure you have heard a lot about them. First of all, the briefing that was given by Mr. Spinney on the plans reality mismatch with regard to the cost of weapons clearly is one category of concern. It strikes me, just from the tactical subcommittee hearings of the Armed Services Committee that I have sat through that we have a tremendous number of different weapons being produced. I think the figure that we heard from the Navy was that they had 16 production lines for aircraft. In many cases, there were as few as six of any particular kind of aircraft being produced in 1 year, which is obviously an inefficient production rate. It does seem that we could reduce the number of production lines and in that way reduce the overall cost and still keep the overall number of aircraft constant or even increase the number.

Another category of concern is the capability of weapons. It is very difficult, I have found, to get very definitive statements as to the capability of some of the different weapons systems we are putting large amounts of money into. Obviously, the services are advocating the purchase of the weapons systems, but various questions have been raised to the effectiveness of some of them, particularly the very high technology ones. It is difficult for a person like myself, on one of these committees, to assess the pros and cons of the debate with regard to the capability of the different weapons systems. The Congress could clearly use additional help in this area.

The third area where I have found it difficult to get a handle on is the extent of the threat. I understand the President is going to have a press conference on that this evening. He is going to bring out some more information on Soviet capabilities. But I have found it very difficult to get objective answers from many of the witnesses that have come before the Armed Services Committee as to the extent of the threat. As far as numbers are concerned, I am sure the figures are accurate, but to get any kind of statement pointing out any weakness in any Soviet aircraft, or Soviet tank, or any other of their weapons, you nearly have to drag it out of a witness. I have found in many cases you have to talk to people outside of the Defense Department in order to get what appears to me to