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FLOOR STATEMENT BY SENATOR BARRY GOLDWATER (R-AZ), CHAIRMAN,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TACTICAL WARFARE, SENATE ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE, MARCH 3, 1983

MR. PRESIDENT, I WOULD LIKE TO CALL MY COLLEAGUES' ATTENTION TO THE COVER STORY IN THIS WEEK'S TIME MAGAZINE. IT IS ENTITLED "THE WINDS OF REFORM" AND IT IS ONE OF THE MOST REMARKABLE ARTICLES I HAVE EVER READ. IT IS REMARKABLE NOT FOR ITS SUBJECT MATTER ON "MILITARY REFORM"--FOR THERE IS PRECIOUS LITTLE IN THE ARTICLE THAT HAS NOT ALREADY BEEN PUBLISHED IN OTHER, LESS DISTINGUISHED JOURNALS--BUT RATHER IT IS REMARKABLE FOR WHAT IT IMPLIES ABOUT TIME MAGAZINE AND OUR SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT.

OVER THE YEARS FEW INSTITUTIONS HAVE BETTER SERVED THIS NATION THAN HAS THE "FREE PRESS". IT IS PERHAPS THE ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT OF A DEMOCRACY. BUT THERE APPEARS TO BE A GROWING TREND IN THIS COUNTRY, AMONG EVEN THE MORE REPUTABLE PUBLICATIONS AS WELL AS THE MAJOR NETWORKS, TOWARD SEEKING OUT THE ONE-SIDED, SENSATIONAL STORY AT THE EXPENSE OF THE BALANCED AND INTELLECTUALLY HONEST PRESENTATION. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TREND ARE ALARMING.

NOW, THIS WOULD NOT BE A MATTER OF ANY GREAT CONCERN IF IT WERE NOT FOR THIS DISTURBING FACT: WE ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY A NATION WHOSE THINKING IS SHAPED ALMOST ENTIRELY BY POWERFUL MEDIA FIGURES AND INFLUENTIAL JOURNALS--NONE OF WHOM BEAR ANY REAL ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE PUBLIC.

SUCH CONSIDERABLE INFLUENCE SHOULD NOT BE FAULTED WHERE FACTS ARE REPORTED ACCURATELY AND BOTH SIDES OF A CONTROVERSY ARE FAIRLY PRESENTED. UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES THE PUBLIC IS FAITHFULLY SERVED. BUT WHERE ACCURACY AND OBJECTIVITY ARE SACRIFICED FOR THE SAKE OF SENSATIONALISM, AND WHERE EDITORIAL OPINIONS ARE ALLOWED TO MASQUERADE AS NEWS, THE PUBLIC IS SHAMEFULLY DECEIVED. AND UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES ONLY THE SELFISH PURPOSES OF THOSE WHO PERPETRATE THE DECEIT ARE SERVED. IN MY OPINION THE COVER STORY IN THIS WEEK'S TIME MAGAZINE IS SUCH A STORY.

THE STORY IS RIFE WITH FACTUAL ERRORS. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT LITTLE OR NO EFFORT WAS MADE TO VERIFY ANY OF THE FACTUAL ASSERTIONS MADE BY THE AUTHORS. CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES:

1. THE ARTICLE SAYS THAT THE NAVY IS BUDGETING FOR ONLY SIX NEW SHIPS THIS YEAR. THE TRUTH IS THAT THE NAVY HAS BUDGETED FOR 14 NEW SHIPS IN 1983 AND 17 IN 1984.
2. THE ARTICLE SAYS THAT THREE M60A3 TANKS MAY BE PURCHASED FOR THE PRICE OF ONE M1. THE TRUTH IS THAT AN M60A3 COSTS ABOUT \$1.3 MILLION EACH WHILE THE M1 COSTS \$1.8 MILLION PER TANK.
3. THE ARTICLE ALLEGES THAT HIGH TECHNOLOGY HAS MADE OUR MODERN FIGHTERS UNRELIABLE. IN FACT, IN 1982 THE FULL MISSION CAPABLE (FMC) RATE OF THE AIR FORCE'S MOST SOPHISTICATED FIGHTER, THE F-15, ACTUALLY EXCEEDED THE

FMC RATE OF THE LEAST SOPHISTICATED FIGHTER, THE F-5. THE RATES WERE:

F-15: 64.6

F-5: 62.3

EVEN MORE NUMEROUS THAN THE FACTUAL ERRORS WERE THE UNSUBSTANTIATED ASSERTIONS OF THE AUTHORS. SOME OF THESE WERE QUITE REMARKABLE. FOR INSTANCE, THE ARTICLE CLAIMED:

1. "THE AVAILABILITY RATE OF THE BATTLE-READY FIGHTERS WILL DECLINE IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS." YET NOT A SHRED OF EVIDENCE WAS OFFERED TO BACK UP THIS STATEMENT. THE TRUTH IS THAT FOR THE NAVY ALONE, THERE HAS BEEN A 16 PERCENT INCREASE IN COMBAT AIRCRAFT READINESS RATES SINCE 1980 AND THE TREND IS PREDICTED TO CONTINUE UPWARD OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. THE AIR FORCE IS PREDICTING RATES EVEN HIGHER THAN THE NAVY'S.
2. THE ARTICLE STATED THAT THE PENTAGON PROMOTES PROGRAM MANAGERS "FOR PUSHING A MAJOR PROJECT TO COMPLETION, WHATEVER THE PRICE". NOT A SINGLE EXAMPLE WAS OFFERED TO SUPPORT THIS INSULTING STATEMENT. YET TO REFUTE THIS ALLEGATION THERE ARE NUMEROUS EXAMPLES FROM THE PAST TWO YEARS OF PROGRAM MANAGERS WHO WERE IN FACT RELIEVED BECAUSE OF COST PROBLEMS IN THEIR PROGRAMS.

THERE WERE ALSO EXAMPLES OF MISLEADING OR PERHAPS
DOWNRIGHT DISHONEST IMPLICATIONS. CONSIDER THESE TWO:

1. THE ARTICLE IMPLIED THAT THE VIPER ANTI-TANK MISSILE
HAD ONCE BEEN EXPECTED TO PENETRATE THE FRONTAL ARMOR
OF MODERN SOVIET TANKS. IT SAID, "WORSE YET, THE
SCALED-DOWN WARHEAD COULD NO LONGER PENETRATE THE
FRONTAL ARMOR OF MODERN BATTLE TANKS NOR STOP SOVIET
TANKS HEAD-ON." THE TRUTH IS THAT THE VIPER WAS
NEVER EXPECTED TO PENETRATE THE FRONTAL ARMOR OF MODERN
SOVIET TANKS. IT WAS DESIGNED TO PENETRATE THE FRONTAL
ARMOR OF OLDER SOVIET TANKS SUCH AS THE T-62. THE
SPECIFICATIONS REQUIRED IT BE ABLE TO PENETRATE 14
INCHES OF STEEL--IN FACT, IT WILL PENETRATE 19 INCHES.
2. USING A FAMILIAR AND VERY DECEPTIVE COMPARISON OF
CONSTANT DOLLARS AND OUT-YEAR DOLLARS THE ARTICLE STATED
THAT THE COST OF THE F/A-18 HAD TRIPLED. IN FACT IF
ONE COMPARES THE CURRENT COST FOR THE F/A-18 AND THE
DEVELOPMENT ESTIMATE IN CONSTANT DOLLARS, THE COSTS ARE:
DEVELOPMENT ESTIMATE (75\$): \$9.9 MILLION PER
AIRCRAFT
CURRENT ESTIMATE (75\$): \$10.28 MILLION PER
AIRCRAFT

THAT REPRESENTS LESS THAN FIVE PERCENT REAL GROWTH IN
THE UNIT COST OF THE AIRCRAFT.

FINALLY, THE AUTHORS WERE APPARENTLY GIVEN LICENSE TO EXPRESS THEIR PERSONAL OPINIONS AS IF THEY WERE MAKING STATEMENTS OF UNCONTESTED FACT. FOR EXAMPLE:

1. "... CLEAR THINKING LIKE BOYD'S WAS RARE IN THE AIR FORCE BUREAUCRACY".
2. "MOST IMPORTANT, THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF MUST BE REFORMED".
3. "INDEED, WEAPONS OFTEN SEEM TO DICTATE STRATEGY, RATHER THAN THE REVERSE".

THESE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE MANY JOURNALISTIC FLAWS WHICH PERVADED THE ARTICLE. IT IS INEXCUSABLE THAT A MAGAZINE THAT ENJOYS THE CREDIBILITY THAT TIME DOES, SHOULD TOLERATE THIS SORT OF SHODDY JOURNALISM. IT MAY BE TROUBLESOME TO ENSURE THAT ALL FACTS ARE SCRUPULOUSLY VERIFIED BUT A JOURNAL CONCERNED ABOUT ITS PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS WILL DEMAND IT. AND IT MAY BE AN ADDITIONAL BURDEN TO ENSURE THAT EDITORIAL COMMENTS ARE CONFINED TO EDITORIAL PAGES BUT A REPUTABLE JOURNAL WILL ACCEPT NOTHING LESS.

MR. PRESIDENT, IT IS MY OPINION THAT TIME MAGAZINE WAS SEDUCED. THEY LISTENED UNQUESTIONINGLY TO THE ARGUMENTS OF A SMALL BUT VOCAL MINORITY, DECIDED THEY HAD THE MAKINGS OF A SENSATIONAL STORY, THEN PUBLISHED THAT STORY WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST EFFORT TO VERIFY THE FACTS OR BALANCE WHAT IS A STRIKINGLY UNBALANCED PRESENTATION.

IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT THE SO-CALLED "REFORMIST" THEMES WHICH DOMINATED THE TIME STORY ARE NOT NEW ONES. THEY ARE CONCEPTS WHICH HAVE BEEN THOROUGHLY DEBATED IN VARIOUS COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS AND, ALMOST WITHOUT EXCEPTION, HAVE BEEN REJECTED. BUT THE AUTHORS OF "THE WINDS OF REFORM" WRITE ABOUT THESE IDEAS WITH SUCH BEGUILING FRESHNESS, RESURRECTING SUCH LONG-DISCREDITED STATEMENTS AS THE 3 TO 1 COST RATIO OF THE M1 TANK TO M60A3, THAT ONE WOULD THINK THEY HAVE JUST UNCOVERED THE GREAT SCANDAL OF THE 1980'S. IT IS, IN FACT, NOTHING MORE THAN "HYPE".

TIME WAS QUICK TO EMBRACE THE PREDICTIONS OF A YOUNG PENTAGON ANALYST, CHUCK SPINNEY, WHO APPEARED LAST WEEK BEFORE THE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE. MR. SPINNEY'S WORK REPRESENTS A RATHER SEVERE INDICTMENT OF THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION'S ABILITY TO ACCURATELY PREDICT WEAPONS COSTS. BUT TIME FOUND UNWORTHY OF MENTION THE FACT THAT THERE IS NOW HARD EVIDENCE--NOT MERELY AN ANALYSTS'S PROJECTION--THAT THE EFFORTS OF THIS ADMINISTRATION TO CONTROL PENTAGON COST GROWTH HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL. CONSIDER THESE TWO FACTS: THE TOTAL COST GROWTH AMONG THE ARMY'S 13 MAJOR WEAPONS PROGRAMS FROM DECEMBER 1981 TO DECEMBER 1982 WAS LESS THAN ONE-HALF OF ONE PERCENT. FOR THE AIR FORCE THE TOTAL COSTS ACTUALLY DECLINED SIX-TENTHS OF ONE PERCENT. IT IS ALSO WORTH NOTING THAT THE WASHINGTON POST, HARDLY A SUPPORTER OF THIS ADMINISTRATION'S DEFENSE EFFORTS, FOUND THE SPINNEY HEARING SO UNREMARKABLE IT WAS RELEGATED TO PAGE 5.

MR. PRESIDENT, THE EFFECTS OF AN ARTICLE LIKE THIS ARE EASY TO PREDICT. A LARGE SEGMENT OF THE PUBLIC WILL ACCEPT AT FACE VALUE THE FACTUAL ERRORS, UNSUBSTANTIATED ASSERTIONS AND BLATANT EDITORIAL OPINIONS WHAT APPEAR THROUGHOUT THIS ARTICLE. THEY WILL BE OUTRAGED BY WHAT THEY READ AND WE WILL HEAR ABOUT IT HERE IN CONGRESS.

BUT I AM AFRAID, MR. PRESIDENT, THAT WE HAVE NEITHER THE TIME NOR THE RESOURCES TO FULLY UNDO THE DAMAGE THAT IS DONE BY AN ARTICLE SUCH AS THIS. SOME OF MY COLLEAGUES, I SUSPECT, MAY FIND IT EASIER TO JOIN WITH THE CRITICS WHO BASK IN THE FAVOR OF THE PRESS, RATHER THAN RESIST THESE REPEATED EFFORTS TO DISCREDIT OUR ARMED SERVICES.

WE, IN CONGRESS, HAVE AVAILABLE TO US ALL THE INFORMATION NECESSARY TO WEIGH THE ALTERNATIVES AND REACH THE RIGHT CONCLUSIONS. BUT I WONDER WHETHER WE WILL DECIDE OBJECTIVELY AND WISELY IF THE PUBLIC--TO WHOM WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE--IS GOADED BY A PRESS WHICH PLACES A GREATER PREMIUM ON SENSATIONALISM THAN ON BALANCED REPORTING?

PERHAPS, ULTIMATELY THE QUESTION IS THIS: WHO REALLY GOVERNS THIS NATION, THE ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE OR THE UNELECTED MEDIA FIGURES AND JOURNALISTS UPON WHOM THE PUBLIC RELIES FOR INFORMATION? I, FOR ONE, AM BEGINNING TO WONDER.