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BRAC Commission

FAX

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REMARKS:

Urgent

For your review

Reply ASAP

Please comment

Marilyn,
Additional information for
your review.

Thanks
Ed Abouder

**AMERICAN FEDERATION
Of
GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES**

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**Edward Abounader
President**

Dear Marilyn,

Roy Higgins will be leaving for Kuwait tomorrow to bring additional Operation Iraqi Freedom contingency accounts to DFAS/Rome. This will be the first of five military essential Rome specific accounts that solidify the current war fighting work already being done here. Mr. Higgins and DFAS/Rome will now be the sole accountable officer responsible for these funds and as such a critical component in the current war effort.

This further exemplifies DFAS/Rome essential value to providing uninterrupted service to the military actions in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Again, this work is exclusive to DFAS/Rome and not part of current DFAS Center activity.

Sincerely,


Ed Abounader
President AFGE 201
Secretary AFGE 171

LETTERS

BRAC must keep the depots

Our government has made a needed investment in arsenals, ammunition plants and depots primarily for quick response and mobilization. Some of the facilities were sized to meet the demands of past wars. This capacity is always considered excess in times of peace, but is always needed when we are threatened.

Some politicians and their supporters have tried to eliminate this mobilization capability, gambling that the private sector could respond to emergencies by switching from consumer production to war materiel production. A review of the production buildup for World War II and even Korea will demonstrate the folly in this thought process.

In May 1952, 23 months after North Korea invaded South Korea, the U.S. Army chief of staff notified Congress that the Army was rationing ammunition in Korea. Why? Because production had not reached the levels necessary to replace consumption, and almost the entire World War II inventory of certain types of ammunition had been depleted.

During the Vietnam War, many things were modified in the field to better suit the actual need, and the designs were sent back to the arsenals to quickly make drawings and an adequate inventory. Thank God for the arsenals and their responsiveness to field demands and quick turnaround time, for this saved many lives of troops in combat.

The private sector will not, out of patriotism, build a production base with contingency capacity unless it is paid to keep that production base idle and available. Contractors will remain in the base only as long as they are provided sustaining contracts. Currently, when that is done on a minimum-sustaining rate, it inflates the cost of the products produced. Chief executives must have a return on investment, as they answer to shareholders and not to the public.

The arsenals, Army ammunition plants and depots have standby capability that is needed in emergencies. We have seen this value during the current war on terror, and in pre-

vious wars and emergencies. They have trained people who can begin work immediately without the need of contracts and time-consuming negotiations of cost and prices.

During the Clinton administration, there was extensive consolidation to quickly realize the peace dividend. Later, at a 2004 hearing of the House Armed Services Committee's panel overseeing land forces, Richard Palaschak of the Munitions Industrial Base Task Force told Congress that the defense consolidation of the 1990s greatly diminished the U.S. industrial base capable of producing ammunition required by the military. Currently, there is not enough capacity among American companies to meet the demand.

U.S. companies would need financial incentives to make the investments in facilities and equipment to meet the military's needs, Palaschak told the committee. This is true not only of ammunition but of many items needed by our military for a conventional war.

The reduction of our arsenals, depots and ammunition plants is false economy, as it will ultimately threaten our defense and survival as a republic. I believe it only leaves us at a point where we have to elevate to a nuclear response or concede defeat. Both of those extremes are unacceptable, as they provide no adequate response to the types of threats we face today.

GEORGE NICKOLAS,
CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL
CONTRACT MANAGER
Davenport, Iowa

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