

OPERA – fiche sociographique - défense

Prénom, Nom:

William D. Price

Contact :

Catégorie : Législatif

Dates de naissance / décès :

1910 ou 1911

Lieu de naissance :

Genre : Male

Lieu de résidence (si DC avant l'accession à un poste retenu, avec si possible l'année de l'emménagement à DC):

Formation :

BA/BS	
MA/MS	
PhD	
Law degree (JD...)	
Autre	

Profession initiale :

Carrière :

1987- 1994 : Professional Staff, Committee on Armed Services Staff, House of Representatives

Sources biblio/bio, articles, divers.

NEWS READY FOR A WAR TO END ALL WARS U.S. STOCKPILING WWI MATERIEL By Mark Thompson, Knight-Ridder News Service 734 words 23 February 1992 The Record REC All Editions.=.Sunday a23 English

It rests in countless vats, vaults, and depots across the country, intended to carry the nation through the first three years of a global war.

But a look inside the Pentagon's little-known National Defense Stockpile suggests that if World War III breaks out, the U.S. military will be ready to fight World War I all over again. Among its contents:

{BUL} 150,000 tons of tannin, used in tanning cavalry saddles and knapsacks _ enough, in the words of one top Pentagon official "to refight the Civil War."

{BUL} 1.5 million pounds of quartz crystals, at the heart of antique radios.

{BUL} 3.3 million ounces of quinine, an anti-malaria compound supplanted years ago by superior medicines.

{BUL} 22 million pounds of mica, used as windows in camp stoves and to insulate radio vacuum tubes _ technological artifacts from earlier in this century.

{BUL} 7 million pounds of thorium nitrate, a radioactive mineral that glows when hot _ the key to keeping those kerosene lamps glowing brightly around the old campfire.

And so it goes, 50 million tons of materials valued at about \$9 billion. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney says that's about \$7 billion more than the Pentagon needs for a full-scale war.

Portions of nearly half the 91 stockpiled materials don't meet Pentagon standards, defense officials say, and about one-third have been obsolete for at least 20 years.

Yet the stockpile continues to bulge, largely at the insistence of an 81-year-old congressman and his 82-year-old aide, a pair of World War II veterans who vividly recall shortfalls in the "Arsenal of Democracy" during that conflict.

"I don't see anything that has happened so far in the world that would say that the stockpile we now have is excessive," said Rep. Charles E. Bennett, D-Fla., chairman of the House Armed Services Committee's subcommittee on strategic materials and one of Capitol Hill's last World War II vets. "There's no indication there couldn't be another three-year war."

His aide, William D. Price, a retired Air Force major general, admits that much of the stockpiled material isn't needed. "We've got a hell of a lot of stuff in the stockpile that's no cotton-picking good," said Price, who oversees the inventory for Bennett's subcommittee.

But Price defends the stockpile as an "insurance policy" to keep the nation strong during a prolonged conflict. "The lack of natural rubber killed Germany in its war with Russia," he noted.

Bennett agreed: "In an emergency, the stockpile would buy us time when the defense industry badly needs raw materials to replace weapons," said the congressman, who was first elected from his Jacksonville district in 1948, when the stockpile was two years old. "More important, as weapons reach our combat forces faster, more lives would be saved."

A government investigator who has looked into the stockpile calls Bennett and Price men who "grew up during the Depression, keeping money in their mattresses. They feel very strongly we need a big stockpile."

Congress won't allow the Pentagon to sell anything from the stockpile if the stockpile account has more than a \$100 million surplus. In other words, unless it keeps buying, it can't sell. Currently there's a \$300 million surplus.

Bennett said the Pentagon can sell whatever it wants from the stockpile _ so long as it uses the money to replenish it with materials even the military acknowledges are in short supply, such as beryllium, cadmium, cobalt, platinum, and titanium.

"The Pentagon wants to sell the stockpile and put the money into the Treasury because the government is so bankrupt," he complained.

But military officials say future conflicts will be so short that the idea of a stockpile is almost quaint. "In our most recent military engagement _ Desert Storm _ there were no requirements for material from the stockpile," noted Colin McMillan, the Pentagon official who oversees it.

"The stockpile wasn't set up for a . . . war like Desert Storm," Price retorted. "It was set up to tide us over in case we get caught with our pants down and can't get this stuff from overseas."

MILITARY PANEL STAFF: ROOTS OF POWER

By RICHARD HALLORAN, Special to the New York Times

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WASHINGTON, June 25 -- The staff of the House Armed Services Committee is considered by its admirers to be among the strongest and most powerful committee staffs on Capitol Hill and by its critics to be among the most arbitrary and autocratic.

A senior military officer said admiringly: "Strong staff, weak committee." A veteran Congressional official differed, saying: "The staffers just run roughshod over the members." Either way, there is widespread agreement that members of the committee's professional staff have more influence on military budgets, weapons and research and development than do members of the committee itself. That makes them among the most influential people in Washington in determining the military posture of the United States.

'High Priests' of Legislation

"The members of that staff are the high priests of the legislative process," a critic said. It is a mark of the Armed Services staff members' influence that plenty of people in Washington were willing to talk about them, but no one, even admirers, was willing to be quoted.

The power of the Armed Services committee's staff was not always thus, by any means. Until 1975, the committee, members and staff alike, was dominated successively by three powerful chairmen, Carl Vinson, L. Mendel Rivers and F. Edward Hebert, all now deceased. But the post-Watergate Congressional revolution of 1975, when entrenched Democratic committee chairmen were overthrown, ended that succession.

Mr. Hebert was replaced by Melvin Price, an Illinois Democrat. A gentle and soft-spoken man, now 77 years old, he is considered to be courteous and fair to the other committee members. But many feel, as does a longtime lobbyist, that the staff director, John J. Ford, "is the de facto chairman of the committee."

Mr. Ford denies that he is the de facto chairman and says that many people do not realize that "Mr. Price is a very good politician, and he knows how to handle pressure."

"When Mr. Price wants to say no," Mr. Ford said, "I'm the one who says no." Longer 'Corporate Memory'

Members of the committee staff are powerful for several reasons. They are older and more experienced than the young men and women who are attracted to Capitol Hill, work for several years and then leave. And military officers serve in the Pentagon for three years, then move on. "Our corporate memory is better than theirs," Mr. Ford said of the military aides.

At the age of 55, Mr. Ford has been on the staff since 1965. William H. Hogan Jr., the general counsel, is 66 and a retired Navy captain. William D. Price, 72, spent 30 years in the military and retired from the Air Force as a major general. Seymour Shwiller, 63, is a retired Army colonel, Edward J. Bauser, 62, a retired Navy captain, and Alan C. Chase, 45, a recently retired Air Force colonel.

The committee staff includes younger people whom Mr. Ford says he has brought in to prevent "block obsolescence." Robert M. Emmerichs, 35, spent 10 years in the Air Force, meanwhile earning a master's degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in aerospace engineering. Thomas E. Cooper, 39, has a master's degree in mechanical engineering.

But the staff member who draws the most comment is Anthony R. Battista, 44, a specialist in mathematics, aerospace matters and naval weapons. He is considered brilliant by some, arrogant by others and perhaps the most influential staff member by nearly everyone. 'Better Have Him Aboard'

"I don't think you can underestimate the influence of Tony Battista," a lobbyist said. "If you want your weapons program, you'd better have him aboard." A defense contractor said: "If he's against you, you're in trouble. He will fight a bear with a buggy whip."

Mr. Battista works primarily for the Subcommittee on Research and Development, which decides which weapons programs will be started. With his expertise and self-assurance, another Congressional staff aide said, "Tony Battista blows the members away 9 times out of 10."

Mr. Battista was on vacation and unavailable for comment. Mr. Ford said of him: "Tony is influential and he tends to be very forceful and positive in his views. But he is no more influential than any other key staffer."

Formerly, the committee had only legislative oversight, while the Appropriations Committee voted military funds. Today, having persuaded Congress to give it more power, the Armed Services Committee must authorize most expenditures before an appropriation can be approved.

The staff has grown with its power. Under Mr. Vinson, there were only three professional staff members. Under Mr. Rivers, there were seven, and under Mr. Hebert, 16. Today there are 30, plus an equal number of administrative and clerical workers. Reams of Classified Papers

In Washington, it is axiomatic that information is power. The professional staff of Armed Services has taken that to heart, Congressional staff aides say. The staff receives reams of highly classified and technical documents from the Department of Defense, from defense contractors and from research organizations.

But the staff is vigilant in controlling access to those documents. Members of a Congressman's staff, even with proper clearances, usually cannot see them and thus cannot do homework for their busy bosses. The Congressman himself can look at them only under carefully monitored circumstances, and that is sometimes at the last minute, just before a bill is to be marked up.

Much of the committee's work in hearings, debate and preparing legislation goes on behind closed doors. Because only members of the committee and the committee staff are permitted in the room, a Congressman cannot bring in a specialist on his personal staff to advise him.

The committee staff may be more cohesive than most because, unlike most staffs on Capitol Hill, it is not divided into majority and minority sections, on the theory that national defense should be nonpartisan. "If the staff was politicized, it would not have so much power," a defense contractor said. "It would have power only with the majority Democrats." Coming Spending Conference

Congressional aides who relish a political fight are eagerly anticipating the House-Senate conference that will be called later this year to reconcile differences between the two houses' versions of the 1983 Defense Authorization Bill for the fiscal year starting October 1.

Much of the bargaining will be done by staff specialists. While the Senate Armed Services staff is considered bright and able, it is younger and less experienced; the Republicans gained control of the Senate only 18 months ago.

"The House staff will chew up the Senate," a House official said. But a longtime lobbyist said that Senator John Tower, the Texas Republican who is chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, would balance things out. "He'll put on golf shoes and stomp and kick," the lobbyist said.

Sources additionnelles :