

JUNE 2008

UPDATE

Business Executives For National Security

“Wartime Sense of Urgency” Needed

SecDef Gates Leads Call for Business-Government Partnerships

Accepting the BENS Eisenhower Award for his decades of public service, Defense Secretary Robert Gates capped off BENS’ biggest day of the year – our annual Washington Forum and Eisenhower Award Dinner on May 15, which highlighted the critical need for public-private partnerships to secure America.

Secretary Gates: New “Sense of Urgency” Needed – Thanking BENS for new ideas and solutions that have “saved the taxpayers billions of dollars and made our military a more effective fighting force,” Secretary Gates said in his address – before a black-tie audience of hundreds of business, defense, and political leaders – that it is necessary to “upend assumptions and practices that have accumulated in a largely peacetime military establishment.” Describing some of the bureaucratic challenges he has faced in his 17 months as secretary, he said that the entire defense establishment and its industry partners must be put “on a war footing with a wartime sense of urgency.” Gates – who also was honored with a special tribute from former National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft – pledged that he and other defense leaders would continue to clearly articulate their priorities because, “When we do, the bureaucracy responds, industry responds, the nation responds.” Read Gates’ full remarks at <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1242>. To see pictures of the Eisenhower Award gala, go to <http://www.bens.org/gala-2008.html>.

Annual Forum: “What Needs to Be Done” – Ensuring that the nation – including the private sector – indeed responds to current and emerging security challenges was also a key theme at BENS’ 19th annual Washington Forum earlier in the day. BENS members heard from, among others, CIA Director General Michael Hayden and former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, who said that meeting 21st-century security challenges requires “intellectual power, economic strength [and] a clear understanding of what threatens America and what needs to be done.” But as former Comptroller General David Walker emphasized in closing, we must put our nation’s financial house in order or national security will become unaffordable. For more on the Forum, go to <http://www.bens.org/forum-2008.html>.

New BENS Advisory Council: “National Security Luminaries” – Speaking at the Eisenhower Dinner, Chairman Joe Robert, Jr. announced the creation of the BENS Advisory Council, “a select group of esteemed national security luminaries, military and civilian, to whom we’ll look for counsel and strategic advice.” He then welcomed the first council members: former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger; former Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin; former United Nations Ambassador Thomas Pickering; former FBI and CIA Director William E. Webster; former Supreme Allied Commander, Europe and Marine Corps Commandant Gen. James Jones; former Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Joseph Ralston; former Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Vernon Clark; and former Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army Gen. Eric Shinseki.

Event Highlights and BENS Developments

Welcome (A)Board – BENS welcomes three new members to its Board of Directors, elected at the Board's May 16 meeting: Mark Gerencser, Senior Vice President at Booz Allen Hamilton in Washington and a recent author of *Megacommunities*, a work on public-private partnerships; Frank Sica, Managing Partner at Tailwind Capital in New York City; and John Streicker, Chairman and Founder of Sentinel Real Estate in New York. Also re-elected as Director Emeritus was Neill Brownstein, a stalwart BENS member since 1983.

Bully for BENS – What's 1,100 feet long, weighs 97,000 tons, and is home to over 5,000 service members? It's not a trick question. Rather, it's what eight BENS members saw first-hand May 20-21 on a rare visit to one of our Navy's supercarriers, the *Nimitz*-class *USS Theodore Roosevelt*. The visitors saw nearly every operations area of the ship, from the flight deck to the radar room, and received several private briefings by Admiral Jonathan Greenert, Commanding Officer of Fleet Forces Command, and Captain Ladd Wheeler, Commanding Officer of the *Roosevelt*. See pictures of this out-of-the-ordinary excursion off the coast of Norfolk, Virginia, at <http://www.bens.org/uss-tr.pdf>.

Business Force and Regional Partnership News

How a (BENS) Idea Becomes (Georgia) Law – Doing good but getting sued: it's the fear that keeps many companies from volunteering their equipment and expertise after a disaster. Now, thanks in large part to BENS, Georgia businesses no longer need worry. On May 14, Governor Sonny Perdue made Georgia one of just a handful of states to extend Good Samaritan liability protections to companies – not just individuals – who help their communities in times of crisis. Congratulations to members of BENS' Georgia Business Force who played a major role in championing the legislation, along with partners like the Georgia Attorney General, Georgia Division of Public Health, Georgia Emergency Management Agency, and Georgia Chamber of Commerce. BENS – which called for such laws in our Business Response Task Force last year, convened after Hurricane Katrina – is supporting similar legislation in California. Read the text of the new Georgia law – which even covers participation in emergency drills – at <http://www.bens.org/samaritan.pdf>.

Business' Arsenal of Protection – In a week of simulated hell breaking loose across the U.S. – toxic chemicals released in the Pacific Northwest, a major hurricane slamming the Mid-Atlantic states, and a mass evacuation of Washington, DC – one ray of light was BENS' New Jersey Business Force. As part of a country-wide series of emergency exercises from May 1-8, the Business Force rolled out its new Business Emergency Operations Center, housed at a secure facility at the historic Picatinny Arsenal in northwest New Jersey. From it, a dozen companies and groups (including ADP, AIG, Apex Innovations, Dunn & Bradstreet, Goldman Sachs, Honeywell, NJN, Prudential, and World Care Center) coordinated private-sector response and information-sharing issues with the state and U.S. Departments of Homeland Security, FEMA, and U.S. Northern Command. The experience has already prompted several government requests for follow-on meetings to build on the lessons learned. Thanks to Dr. Michael Chumer of NJBF member New Jersey Institute of Technology for helping make the exercise a success.

Upcoming Events

- **San Francisco** – **"The Future of Democracy in South Asia,"** Jun. 11, 6p.m., India Community Center, Milpitas. Contact Kathy Denzer at (415) 690-6254 or kdenzer@bens.org.
- **Dallas** – **Lunch with former Rep. Charlie Wilson,** subject of the book and movie *Charlie Wilson's War*, Jun. 16. Contact Matthew Elias at (214) 315-2576 or melias@bens.org.
- **Atlanta** – **Lunch with Gen. Charles Campbell,** Commander, U.S. Army Forces Command, Jun. 23, 11:30 a.m.-1:30p.m. Contact Allison Cheatham at (404) 220-1268 or acheatham@bens.org.
- **Kansas City** – **Dinner with Rep. Ike Skelton,** Jul. 1, 6:30p.m., The River Club. Contact William Lawson at (816) 842-1778 or wlawson@bens.org.