

## **G. V. Sonny Montgomery Weekly Radio Show**

Date: May 25, 1994

*Audio begins at 00:03*

Interviewer: This is Congressman Sonny Montgomery's weekly radio report from Washington. An amendment was offered this week to the Defense Authorization Bill that would have ended Selective Service registration for 18-year olds in this country. You opposed the amendment. Why is the Selective Service System still needed?

Montgomery: It's a low cost insurance to our nation that in case we did become in a major conflict such as we had in the Persian Gulf War, we were only 2 or 3 months away from implementing the draft and using the Social Security System and using the data of 18 year olds that had been gathered. We were very close. We would've had a number of casualties in the Persian Gulf War. We would have had to implement the Selective Service System and by doing away with registration that would've delayed almost a year and a year and a half to build up the database again of young men that have reached the age of 18 that you might have to call to active duty so it just made sense the the running the system cost less than 1, C-130 aircraft. So, it's not a big costs at all, but it certainly is a good back up for our country. So, we were able to defeat the registration of of young men at 18 to do away with that. We defeated that almost 2 to 1 vote. Let's hope that Congress will leave leave alone the Selective Service System. The young men are not complaining at all. We've had no complaints from them. They've been patriotic. 98% of these young men have gone and and signed up at 18, gone to the post office, carried their draft card in their wallets. We won a big victory here for selective service.

Interviewer: Another amendment that was approved had to do with the military recruitment on college campuses. It would prevent the awarding of Defense Department grants to colleges and universities which ban recruiters from campus. Did you support that effort?

Montgomery: Did you support that effort? Some of our biggest universities get the most money up in the Northeast part of our country. Have in the past, have not let recruiters come on their campuses. This is terrible. These universities get this defense research money and they won't let 'em come on the campus to recruit people we need. You know people that can go in the National Guard and Reserve and go on active duty. So, I think it's it's it's a good amendment. These people ought to be able to go on the campuses and recruit if they take out defense dollars.

Interviewer: The Secretary of the Navy has approved a plan to shift a squadron of T-2A trainer aircraft from Kingsville Naval Air station in Texas to Meridian Naval Air Station. What's the story on this?

Montgomery: The Secretary called me this week on the phone and told me he'd signed off or he'd approved this proposal to move a squadron of T-2A's from from Kingsville to Meridian. And that certainly helps the Meridian Naval Air Station. That doesn't mean that Meridian might

not be put on the Base Closure List in 1995 but it sure it is a leg up of how busy this airfield will be used. It will increase the number of aircraft that will be at Meridian to over 42 additional airplanes. And it will bring in both civilians and Naval persons to learn how to be a Naval aviator. So, it's it's a wonderful step for us. That the Meridian Naval Air Station will be awful awful busy in the next 2 or 3 years. And it will save about 76 million dollars over a 5-year period will eventually get rid of the T-A4 aircraft and use all the T-2's in in Meridian and it's a good mission. It saves the taxpayers money and helps the Meridian Naval Air Station.

Interviewer: And at least in the short term some jobs and more aviators will come to Meridian, it's that true?

Montgomery: That is correct. Yeah there will be, the whole squadron is is coming to Meridian, I'm not sure of the exact number year. But I believe count civilians and military personnel it will be between 3 and 4 hundred additional persons in the Meridian Naval Air Station. We will be able to take care of them. We have the facilities. We have the barracks. We have everything to get the job done.

Interviewer: Thank you Congressman. This has been Congressman Sonny Montgomery's weekly radio report from Washington.

*Audio ends at 04:42*