

# Office of the Governor

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## NEWS RELEASE

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RELEASE: June 4, 1999

### **Governor Emphasizes Commitment to Military**

Gov. Christie Whitman provides frequent radio messages to radio stations throughout the state. Each message focuses on a different concern or event of interest to New Jerseyans.

In this message, Gov., Whitman emphasizes the need to support New Jersey's military installations. The Governor also stresses that recent world events have made it clear that the United States must continue to support a strong national defense.

Gov. Whitman recently toured the Picatinny Arsenal in Rockaway Township. The arsenal conducts research and development to munitions testing and their work, as the Governor says in the radio address, could someday save the lives of American soldiers.

Attached is the text of the message.

The radio message can be accessed by calling the Governor's actuality line at 609-292-3249.

### **RADIO ADDRESS FOR JUNE 4, 1999 IMPORTANCE OF NEW JERSEY MILITARY INSTALLATIONS**

Hello, this is Governor Christie Whitman.

Recent world events have made it increasingly clear that, despite the end of the Cold War, the United States must continue to support a strong national defense.

Over just the past year, we've seen the United States engage in a campaign against Saddam Hussein and take part in protracted NATO bombings of Kosovo.

What's more, the report of the Cox Committee has detailed how the People's Republic of China is using stolen U.S. technology to build missiles that could be used against us.

Ironically, while the need for a strong defense is increasing, national defense is the only major category of federal spending to decline over the past decade.

During the 1990's, Navy ships have decreased from 546 to 333, fighter wings from 24 to 13, and our Army has gone from 18 divisions to 10. Our defense has been reduced so much that military spending has not even kept up with inflation.

This is worrying when you consider that we live in an era where our military is increasingly depending upon advanced technology to achieve success.

That is why I would like to take this opportunity to talk to you about the importance of preserving the Garden State's military facilities.

New Jersey's military installations play a vital role in our nation's security.

Earlier this week, I had a chance to see this for myself as I toured the Picatinny Arsenal in Rockaway Township.

While I had long been aware of the outstanding, cutting-edge work done at Picatinny, seeing it in person was even more impressive.

From research and development to munitions testing, there's no doubt that the work being done right here in New Jersey could someday save the lives of American soldiers. This confirms my belief that supporting our military installations is another way we can support our young people in the armed services.

This administration, as it has shown time and time again, is committed to supporting our soldiers on active duty and championing the rights of veterans.

I am proud to say that we in New Jersey have never forgotten the cost of freedom - or the men and women who fought to secure and defend our nation.

For example, we are working hard to complete a New Jersey Korean War Veterans Memorial in time for the 50th anniversary of that conflict next year. And our New Jersey Vietnam Veterans Memorial stands as a lasting tribute to those who fought in that war.

I will continue to do all I can to honor our debt of gratitude to those who have served our country.

That is why I was so shocked to hear the recent CWA ads alleging that our civil service reforms are an attack on veterans. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The truth is that veterans will not be harmed or affected in any way by the reform rules under consideration. In fact, as an extra measure of caution, we've requested that the civil service reform regulations include language stating that veterans are completely exempt from the proposed changes.

I am proud of my administration's record toward veterans. I am equally proud of the special role New Jersey's military installations play in supporting troops on active duty.

While we all hope that American soldiers are kept from harm's way, the reality is that military preparation is part of the price of our freedom. I am proud of the role that New Jersey's military installations play in preserving that freedom.

Thank you, and have a great week.