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(Examiner.com)

By: Devonia Smith

The type of leadership that we learn in the military is a steady state of sustained leadership," said Republican Congressman and retired Army Lieutenant Colonel, Allen West - this morning - speaking of President Obama's leadership during the budget debate to on Fox & Friends. "I was happy to see that he did finally step up to the plate, but I think he still missed the ball."

To get the low-down on how the Commander-in-Chief of the military's leadership is perceived when the military's pay is used as a bargaining chip, ask a military man. Congressman West was a choice guest precisely because of his military experience. Relevant to the final round of the budget debate, it appeared to many that Democrats and President Obama were more than willing to hold military pay hostage to debt reduction negotiations with Republicans; and it begs the question: Should military pay be used as a political pawn?

West thinks not; recalling how he had spoken to his Korean troops in 1995, explaining to them that they might not get their pay during another time when government shutdown was imminent.

Following is the transcript of his recollections of that period of his young military career; and an explanation of why it's past time to permanently take military pay off the table in budget debates: (Transcribed by Devonia Smith, Political Transcripts Examiner)

I was very upset ... I remember in 1995, when I was a young Army major stationed in Korea, having to talk to our soldiers about this whole thing about a shut-down. I think the most important thing we should have done was that back in January or February, we should have gone ahead and done a Defense Appropriations Bill so that we got that taken care of for the rest of the fiscal year 2011.

But as we move forward, I think we need to make sure that for fiscal year 2012 that we get that Defense Appropriation Bill, the National Defense Authorization Act. We have to get that passed, first and foremost, so that we can ensure that our men and women in uniform, out there serving us, will never have to again be used as part of this debate."

Keeping the goals of the mission in mind, West concluded, "We have changed the political culture here in Washington, D.C., where we are actually talking about cuts in spending. So I think the era of big spending in Washington, D.C. is over." Pointing out that there was much more to be accomplished, West added, "It's kinda like an aircraft carrier. It takes five miles to turn it around, but at least we're starting that motion."