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FILE ONLYGATES/REMARK
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Acting CIA Director Robert Gates apparently fell victim to a live microphone when he made an off-the-cuff remark while being photographed before his second day of confirmation proceedings to be CIA director.

Asked Wednesday about a report that he had said, "You can take this job and shove it," Gates told reporters, "That's not so."

But then he said, "I made a joking remark and should have covered the microphone. I should say that I think that's most unfortunate frankly that it was heard. That was an offhanded attempt to make a joke with photographers."

A radio reporter listening to the pool feed of the hearing said reporters heard Gates laughing and joking before the proceeding began. At one point, he said, "Remember that old country and western song, 'Take This Job and Shove It.'"

Singer Johnny Paycheck popularized the song in the late 1970s.

President Reagan unknowingly was picked up by a live microphone prior to one of his Saturday radio broadcasts. In a reference to the Soviet Union, he was heard saying, "We begin bombing in five minutes."