

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ENZI). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I want to talk about a couple of issues. First of all, I commend the distinguished ranking member, Senator FEINSTEIN, and the chair of the appropriations subcommittee for their outstanding work on the legislative appropriations bill. Many of our colleagues have come to the floor already to speak as eloquently as I have heard about the importance of the Capitol Police, about the importance of those who serve us in so many capacities throughout the Capitol and throughout the Capitol complex itself.

I want to express my support for this bill and for the statement that it makes about the importance that we as Senators put on the work done by our Capitol Police each and every day. Those of us who are fortunate enough to be in Leadership especially recognize the unique role the Capitol Police play. They are with us almost from the time we leave the house to the time we are dropped off at the house late at night. They are with us publicly. They follow us. They protect us. They provide service to us in the most exemplary and professional manner. I think it would be all too easy for some to misinterpret the ill-advised actions taken thus far by the House in their legislative branch appropriations bill.

It was really for that reason many of us felt the need not only to support a good Senate legislative appropriations bill, but to underscore the numbers and the commitment made in the Senate version of this bill by cosponsoring and supporting the amendment offered by the distinguished Senator from Maryland.

We want to say just two words without equivocation to the Capitol Police, to the members of the Congressional Research Service, to the GAO, and to all of those who work so diligently and professionally each and every day: Thank you. Thank you for what you do. Thank you for how you do it. Thank you for setting the example. Thank you for the extraordinary dedication you demonstrate to public service.

That is really the message. I will be surprised if we don't see a 100-0 vote in our expression of gratitude and our desire to ensure that they realize how much we appreciate what they do. While we may not say it each and every day, and we may not walk up as we probably should from time to time to a Capitol Police officer, or to one of our floor staff, or to any of those who serve us, maybe in this small way we

can say as a body, as Senators, regardless of political or philosophical persuasion, thank you. We express our sincere and heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you for dedicating your lives to public service, and in some cases dedicating your lives to the safety of others, safety that oftentimes asks too much of police officers and their families, as we saw just 2 years ago.

So this is as an important a statement as I think we will make this year regarding our Capitol Police and our staff in many respects, and I am hopeful that it won't go unnoticed. I am hopeful that this will serve as a big exclamation point that we are very grateful, and that we are appreciative in ways that probably are not articulated on a regular basis.

#### — NOMINATION OF BRADLEY SMITH

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President I also want to address the matter concerning Bradley Smith. I know there will be time allocated for his nomination later on this afternoon. I will simply take time as if in morning business using the quorum call to address his nomination at this time.

As I have stated before, I have come to the conclusion that I must oppose this nomination. For me, this is not just a vote on a particular nominee with whom I don't agree, this vote is about whether or not we will prove the cynics in America wrong in demonstrating our commitment to strong campaign finance laws.

Yesterday morning in the Washington Post, a Republican strategist who advises Governor Bush and the Republican National Committee said the following:

There are no rules any more . . . There were few if any to begin with but there are virtually none today. They know it, we know it, everybody knows it.

That wasn't Common Cause or Ralph Nader. That was an adviser to Texas Governor George W. Bush.

Governor Bush's adviser is right. In many ways, we have entered the post-Federal Election Campaign Act era. It is the Wild West of "soft money," issue advocacy ads and secret donors.

The system is broken, and everybody knows it. A vote in favor of this nomination will simply confirm what we already know. It doesn't have to be this way. It shouldn't be this way.

I know very few Members of the House and the Senate, of either party, who like our current campaign finance system. I know very few members of either party who prefer raising money to meeting with constituents and working on issues. I know very few members of either party who enjoy the fact that, every time they face reelection, the amount of money that has to be raised to be competitive has risen exponentially. And frankly, I know very few members of either party who don't represent the fact that so many of our legislative activities are scrutinized solely

in the context of donations—which groups backed which said of the argument, and whose money prevailed.

I am irritated by that. I am frustrated by that. That screen should not be the consideration. Even in the media, it shouldn't be the frame within which we view the debate on issues. But that is exactly how it is framed on the Sunday talk shows and in the newspapers.

If we think the current system is unacceptable, that is nothing compared to the way our constituents feel.

Our constituents don't like the current campaign finance system. They don't think it puts their interests first. But they also don't think we'll ever really change it.

In fact, they are convinced of it. Poll after poll showed the American people responding in single digits—not double digits, but single digits—to the question: Do you think Congress will ever change the campaign finance laws? Overwhelmingly, over 90 percent say no.

Today, it seems to me, the Senate can take the first step toward restoring at least a modicum of public trust in American political campaigns.

One thing we can do to promote greater confidence in our electoral system is to ask a simple question before we confirm the men and women who will serve on the Federal Election Commission. It seems to me that fundamental question ought to be: whether those who may be interested in serving believe in the laws on the books today? Do you believe you can objectively enforce the laws? We are asked that question every time we are sworn in. Will you uphold the Constitution? It seems to me upholding the Constitution and all the statutes and the compendium of laws that have been created as a result of our fundamental freedoms established in the Constitution is a prerequisite for serving in public office.

The men and women who, as Commissioners, would have the courage to issue clearer guidelines about what is permissible, and would have the courage to enforce those guidelines are the people whom we should encourage to serve on this and all bodies.

Brad Smith, it is clear to me, does not fit that description. Rather than decrying the weaknesses of our current campaign laws, Mr. Smith has made a career out of criticizing the utility of our federal election law scheme. He has argued for the repeal of the Federal Elections Campaign Act, and he denies that money has a corrupting influence on the political system.

Simply put, when it comes to campaign finance laws, Brad Smith is an anarchist. This is not the marshal who will save the day in Dodge City. Confirming Brad Smith is more like asking Billy the Kid to preserve peace.

Let's be clear. Putting reform-minded FEC Commissioners in place is not enough by itself. We created the FEC and our inaction has created some of

the problems within the FEC with respect to enforcing the laws we have today. Congress has a responsibility to act today to close loopholes, clarify the law, and do everything possible to stem the endless chase of money in which we all engage.

We should pass McCain-Feingold immediately. We should end the abuse of section 527 of the Internal Revenue Code immediately.

Our Constitution doesn't stand in the way. The only thing standing in the way of our taking these modest steps is the reluctance to tamper with the system that we know and that has gotten us elected, even if we don't like it.

We are worried our careers won't survive. It seems to me we should be more worried about whether faith in our system will survive.

The trends are ominous. The soft money accounts in both parties' coffers are at record levels. In the first 15 months of the 2000 election cycle, the national Democratic and Republican Party committees have raised over \$160 million in soft money. Mr. President, \$160 million in corporate, union, and large individual contributions. Is there any real question why Americans are losing faith in our elections system?

Every election cycle, the cost of campaigns goes up and the number of people who vote goes down. If we really want to increase voter participation, we have to address that reality. The reality is, there is simply too much money in politics. We all know, whether we admit it or not, that the current system is broken. We have a choice: Do we reduce the influence of special interests money in Washington? Do we want to wink and nod at the few flimsy campaign laws we have?

Today we have an opportunity to answer that question. It seems to me that if we defeat Brad Smith's nomination and demand we be presented a nominee who will work with us to regain public confidence in our campaign laws, we will be taking the first step. Then we could pass campaign finance reform, the McCain-Feingold bill, and put an end to the flood of soft money into campaigns once and for all, and then shut down the so-called 527 loophole. Those three steps would go a long way in this election cycle, in this session of Congress, to do the right thing. They are things we can and should do. The currency of politics should be ideas, not cash.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. DODD. Before I begin, I commend the distinguished Democratic leader, the minority leader, for his very eloquent statement and comments, particularly in regard to the need for this body to take up the issue of campaign finance reform. I could not agree more. We have had a series of hearings at the Rules Committee on the campaign finance system. We have heard from all sides, but we heard a little more from one side than another.

I tried to arrange for our good friends, Senator FEINGOLD and Senator MCCAIN, to testify. I talked to my colleague from Wisconsin about this so we could hear about the McCain-Feingold bill. I hope our colleagues and others heard the remarks. This is a very important issue. Nothing is more fundamental than trying to get a handle on this process that has gone wild. It is absolutely out of control, and it is getting worse by the day.

While there is obviously a great need to deal with other issues, nothing is more fundamental than how people get here, where their attention is spent, their time and effort, how it is allocated. Until we change the system, in my view, it will only get worse.

I applaud my leader for his comments. I know he reflects the views of the overwhelming majority on this side of the aisle and some on the other side. More importantly, I think the Senator reflects the views of the American public. There may be differences on details, but fundamentally the American public understands this system is not working well at all. The point that we spend more money each year on campaigns, while voter participation seems to be heading in the opposite direction, paints a very clear picture of what the American public thinks. I associate myself with those remarks and commend the Senator for those remarks.

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LEGISLATIVE BRANCH APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001—Continued

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I want to spend a couple of minutes on the legislative appropriations bill and to commend Senator STEVENS and Senator BYRD, the chair and ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, as well as our good friends, the chair and ranking member of the subcommittee, Senator FEINSTEIN and Senator BENNETT, for the work they have done in putting together, I think, a very responsible bill on the Senate side in terms of dealing with the costs of running the legislative branch of Government.

They have put together a good bill. They have been fiscally restrained in their approach. Obviously, our legislative branch should not be exempt from the kind of scrutiny we apply to every single aspect of this, the Federal budget. They are to be commended for packaging a bill that does less than the administration wanted but is certainly far more responsible, far more thoughtful, far more balanced than what the other body has apparently crafted.

The bill here is \$59 million over current spending but \$147 million below the President's budget request for operations of the legislative branch. We need to remember we are not just talking about Members' salary or staffs. We are talking about being the temporary custodians of these buildings we call the Capitol Grounds.

A few minutes ago, I greeted another student group from my State, from Woodstock High School, a group of

eighth graders, and, earlier, a group of students from a school in Washington, DC. I try to tell the young people when they are here, these are their buildings; this is their Government. They are not voters yet, but I want them to develop an appreciation of what has been handed down to us as temporary custodians, what we will be handing down to them in the coming generation so their children and their grandchildren will be able to come to this great Capital City of ours, come to the great buildings, and cherish and appreciate what it represents to them as citizens of the greatest democracy ever created in the history of mankind. As temporary custodians of their well-being, we have a responsibility not to somehow pad the budgets to serve our own comfortable interests but to see to it that we preserve this venue, this seat of democracy, for coming generations.

That is what Senator FEINSTEIN and Senator BENNETT have done with this budget. Regrettably, it is what the other body has not done. That is what makes me so sad. We can have differences here—Democrats, Republicans, conservatives, liberals, moderates—and debate issues. When it comes to the buildings, when it comes to the people every day who work here, whose names you will never know, who care for the facilities, who guard these buildings, not just the Members and the staffs who work here but the 10,000-plus tourists who come to their Nation's Capitol every day and come into the buildings. Officer Chestnut and Officer Gibson, who lost their lives just a few feet from where I am speaking, were protecting not only the membership when those shots fired but protecting hundreds of tourists gathered in the building.

To see a budget that disregards the importance of having good security here, not just for the Senators and Congressmen but for the innocent tourists who come to see their Nation's Capitol, is something of which we ought to be very mindful. What the House has done, of course, was to cut the police force by almost 12 percent, resulting in a reduction in force of almost 30 percent of the police force on these grounds.

I was a young boy in the 1950s in the other Chamber, a few feet from that Chamber, when shots rang out from the gallery, and Members of Congress were shot on that day. I was down in Washington on a spring break. I literally just missed being in the Chamber as a tourist on that day.

We have taken a lot of steps since then to try to see to it that people who are armed can't come in here and threaten the lives of people in these buildings. I remember being a relatively new Member in this Chamber when, I thank the Lord, we had all left on a Monday night and a bomb went off in the building. Had we been here, there would have been those, I suspect, who would have been severely injured, if not killed.