

Some cynics in the House think there is a third option: They want to pass a new bill that sounds acceptable but which they know would not be signed into law. This is a distinction without a difference. Passing a bill that will not become law is no better than passing no bill at all.

Some news reports, quoting senior Democratic aides, have suggested that a stalemate on the surveillance issue is helpful to both sides politically. This should offend anyone who takes America's security seriously. And it is refuted by the 68 Members of the Senate, Democratic and Republican, who voted last month to put the recommendation of the Director of National Intelligence into law.

The Senate's solid bipartisan action followed months of hard work between the two parties on the bill that met three basic criteria: It allowed intelligence professionals to gather information from terrorists overseas, it protected companies that stepped forward in a time of urgent national need to cooperate in the hunt for terrorists, and it was guaranteed to be signed into law by the President.

If the House Democratic leadership acts responsibly, it will follow the same three criteria by sending a good bill to the White House before the end of next week. The most efficient path to success is to take up the Senate-passed bill which a majority of House Members, we already know, support.

The time for action has long since passed. Democrats have had nearly a year to address this problem. Again and again they have asked for extensions, then failed to act once the deadline ran out. They are akin to students who continually put off their homework then ask the teacher for more time, hoping the final deadline will never come.

The acts of the House Democratic leadership make their purpose abundantly clear. If they had their way, an improved surveillance law would never pass in the only manner that is acceptable to the Director of National Intelligence.

It is not too late for the House to do the right thing. They have a full legislative week ahead to allow a simple up-or-down vote on the Senate bill. Our forces fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan will not be leaving their units for spring break. The House should not recess for theirs until they have voted on the Senate's bipartisan FISA reform legislation; to do anything less would be grossly irresponsible.

#### HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT GEORGE S. RENTSCHLER

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to a soldier from Kentucky who was taken from his family, his friends, and his country much too soon. On April 7, 2004, SSG George S. Rentschler of Louisville, in my home State of Kentucky, was on a combat patrol in Baghdad when his ve-

hicle was struck by a rocket-propelled grenade. He was 31 years old.

For the bravery Staff Sergeant Rentschler showed in uniform, he received numerous medals, awards and decorations, including the Army Achievement Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, the Purple Heart, and the Bronze Star Medal.

Staff Sergeant Rentschler's loved ones will remember him as the finest coach, the fastest friend, and the most caring husband and son they ever knew. He loved to make people laugh. And he was, as his young son, Scott, succinctly puts it, the greatest dad you could have ever asked for.

An Army veteran of 10 years, Staff Sergeant Rentschler was raised in Louisville. As a kid he loved to play many sports, especially baseball and football. He enjoyed watching sports as well, particularly the University of Louisville, and he enjoyed the Kentucky Derby as well.

Following in his father Gilbert's footsteps, George was also an avid Detroit Lions fan. George's love of sports went beyond watching or playing, he was invested and actively encouraging others as a coach. "He coached his kids like crazy," says George's mother, Lillian.

George got involved with many youth leagues, coaching baseball and football. He even coached a baseball team while stationed at Fort Knox. Many of those boys came to pay their respects at George's funeral, wearing their baseball caps in honor of their coach who taught lessons both on and off the field.

George went to Southern Middle School and Central High School and graduated from Louisville Male High School. After high school George joined the Army. He served as a training officer at Fort Knox where he attended a noncommissioned officer's academy. He also saw duty at Ft. Hood, Texas; Bosnia; and was stationed in Germany.

George's mother, Lillian, says he especially enjoyed his involvement with U.N. missions because he liked going to other countries. "There wasn't any talking him out of it because he loved doing what he was doing," said Lillian. "He loved his country."

By the time he was deployed to Iraq, George was assigned to the Army's 1st Battalion, 35th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, based out of Baumholder, Germany.

Before shipping overseas, George was lucky enough to meet Rachel, who would become his wife. They met in a club in Louisville. Rachel noticed George because she thought he had the best manners of anyone there. She was so impressed, she got up and introduced herself.

George and Rachel married on September 11, 1998. Over their entire marriage, she cannot remember him ever being in a bad mood. George and Rachel raised two handsome sons, Scott and Brock. While George was deployed to Iraq, Rachel and the boys lived in Germany.

Family time was important to George, and whether it was an elaborate family vacation or a casual trip to a University of Louisville ball game, he always made time for Rachel, Scott, and Brock.

In George's many coaching endeavors, Rachel often wound up playing the "team mom." George told his family often how proud he was to serve in the military and that he loved the camaraderie of his fellow soldiers. He earned their respect by volunteering for the tough jobs.

George's love of coaching, of bringing out the best in others, carried over to his soldiering career. He talked about one day working in the Pentagon, to train and educate younger soldiers. And he was looking forward to making coaching his profession after leaving active service.

My prayers are with the Rentschler family today after their tragic loss. We are thinking of George's wife Rachel; his sons, Scott and Brock; his mother Lillian; and many other beloved family members and friends.

George was predeceased by his father Gilbert. Staff Sergeant Rentschler's funeral service was held at the Carlisle Avenue Baptist Church in Louisville, and he was buried in Sturgis, KY. At the funeral service for her husband, Rachel said of George: "He died doing what he loved."

I want her and the Rentschler family to know George also died a hero, and this Senate honors SSG George S. Rentschler for his life of service. And we honor the immense sacrifice he made on behalf of a grateful nation.

I yield the floor.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### OUTSOURCING THE U.S. AEROSPACE INDUSTRY

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, over the course of this past week, I have come to the Senate floor every single

day to sound an alarm about the misguided and potentially dangerous decision to outsource a major piece of our aerospace industry to Europe.

I have talked about the dismay Boeing workers felt in my home State of Washington when they learned the Pentagon had decided to award a contract to build the next generation of aerial refueling tankers not to Boeing but to a French company, Airbus.

I have talked about my shock that we would award Airbus this contract, given the EU's lengthy history of subsidizing these planes in order to create European, not American, jobs.

I have talked about the fact that Airbus is being less than open about how many U.S. jobs it will really create in this country.

All of these are reasons to be deeply troubled about this decision. But today I want to address yet another concern; that is, the ability to control our national security once we have effectively turned over control of our military capability and technology to a foreign government. This is an issue we all need to take a good hard look at.

America's global military strength is built on our ability to use military might anywhere in the world, at a moment's notice. Our aerial refueling tankers are the critical link that allows the U.S. Air Force to stretch across the globe. From Fairchild Air Force Base in my home State of Washington to the Far East, from Andrews to Baghdad, our bombers and our fighters can fly farther and faster because our tankers, which supply fuel in mid-air, are always there to support them.

Tankers, in fact, are so important to our military that Army GEN Hugh Shelton, who is the former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, once said the motto of the tanker and airlift forces should be: "Try fighting without us."

Until now, the technology that powered these critical planes rested in the hands of Boeing and its American workforce, who have been building them for more than 50 years now.

Until now, our tankers have been built by manufacturers, by designers, and by engineers who have been able to pass on those skills and technology that 50 years of experience brings, and who are bound by law from selling that technology to countries that sponsor terrorism. Well, last Friday, that ended. Last Friday, the Air Force made a decision that will enable a company that is controlled by a foreign government to develop and share that technology. Are we going to look back on this decision and say this is the moment when we threw open the doors to our military technology? Are we going to allow our tankers, a linchpin of our national defense, to be the first domino to fall?

I have said this before. With one contract, we could wipe out what it has taken our Nation 50 years to build up: an experienced and exceptional aerospace industry. Once it is gone, we are not going to get it back. We will not

get it back. Once we lose the ability to produce military technology right here at home, we begin to lose control over our Nation's defense.

This decision effectively gives foreign governments control over aspects of our own national security. In this case, we are giving up control and \$40 billion to the European Aeronautical Defense and Space Company called EADS. That is the company that has made no secret of their desire to dismantle our American aerospace industry. In fact, this decision can be seen as a \$40 billion investment in the military research budget of EADS and Airbus.

So we are allowing Airbus to take over a cornerstone of our military technology, and we are actually paying them to do it. While that certainly doesn't make sense, the fact that this deal could allow Airbus to share American technology with whomever they please is just plain dangerous.

The Air Force's decision means that American tanker technology, which has been developed over the last 50 years, is now out on the free market, available to the highest bidder. Under American law, the law that Boeing has to abide by, they are prohibited from selling technology to countries that sponsor terrorism. In other words, we have control. We have control over where that technology goes right now. But EADS and Airbus don't have to follow those same restrictions. They have said so in the past, and they have demonstrated that they don't care about giving technology to terrorists. They only care about their bottom line.

In fact, back in 2005, EADS was caught trying to sell military helicopters to Iran. But if the company is so pro-American, as they are saying right now, why was it ignoring U.S. policy to isolate Iran? Well, the answer to that question was simple to EADS Representative Michel Tripiier. When he was asked about this back in 2005, his response was:

As a European company, we are not supposed to take into account embargoes from the U.S.

Let me repeat that. Here is what he said:

As a European company, we are not supposed to take into account embargoes from the U.S.

In 2006, EADS, the parent company of Airbus, proved they meant it when they tried to sell transport and patrol planes to Venezuela. That is a circumvention of U.S. law.

What if in the years to come Airbus wants to sell their tanker technology to Pakistan, to China, or to Iran? I wish to remind my colleagues that Russia now owns 5 percent of EADS, and it is pushing for 10 percent more. The United Arab Emirates now controls 7.5 percent of EADS.

What the Air Force has done is extremely shortsighted. They have said it wasn't their responsibility to take our security or our industry into account. Well, I say to my colleagues: Then Congress has to. Congress has to. We need

to be more forward-looking than the Air Force was last Friday.

What happens in 20 years if EADS is controlled by countries that disagree with our policy on, say, Israel or elsewhere in the Middle East or around the globe? What if they decide to slow down production of tankers, to put us at a strategic disadvantage? Right now, we have no way to prevent that.

Where do we go from here? What other aspect of our military technology are we Americans willing to part with? Our aerial tankers are the backbone of our military strength. But what about our other critical military supplies? Are we going to outsource our tanks? Are we going to outsource our military satellites? What about the missiles that are currently made in Alabama? Are we going to outsource those? What about the equipment that has to be delivered constantly to our troops in the field? Are we going to outsource our meals ready to eat, our ammunition? I would not support that, and I know many of my colleagues wouldn't either.

So I am here to ask all of us: Where do we draw the line? The Air Force said it wasn't their job to consider the future of our national security and defense, but we as Senators have taken an oath to do that.

I urge all my colleagues to take pause and truly think about the consequences of this shortsighted contract. The American people and our national security are depending on it.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The senior Senator from Missouri is recognized.

(The remarks of Mr. BOND pertaining to the introduction of S. 2734 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. BOND. I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The senior Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

#### IMMIGRATION

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, our Republican friends are at it again—offering simplistic and unworkable proposals in response to complex immigration issues. Our immigration policies should not only be about security and our economy, but they should reflect our humanity, decency, and morality. We are a Nation of immigrants. Immigrants are devoted to hard work, their families, their faith, and to America.

Mr. President, 70,000 immigrants served honorably in our Armed Forces, and many have given their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan. Those are the values that have built America and we should welcome them.

But you would never know it from the misplaced immigration priorities of my Republican colleagues. Rather than tackle the Nation's priorities, they continue to cater to the basest instincts of the far right fringe. For 7 years, Republicans have failed to fix