For his bravery in uniform, Corporal Coleman received many medals, awards and decorations, including the Army Achievement Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star Medal.

Brent was born in Pikeville, in eastern Kentucky, and spent the majority of his life in the area. From a young age he was not afraid to speak his mind. When Brent was about six or seven, he and his family went to the circus. They had lions there, and the lion tamer was directing them with his whip.

But young Brent thought the lion tamer was using the whip on the lions—and that despite their sharp claws and teeth, they needed a small boy to come to their aid. ''Stop that right now!'' he yelled to the lion tamer. The whole circus audience laughed at Brent's display of compassion and bravery.

Brent loved sports, and grew up playing T-Ball, baseball, and football. Once when Brent and his cousin Ben were both 12 years old, Brent showed Ben how to hold the football close to his chest. Ben took the ball and ran, Brent tackled him, and I guess Ben was holding the ball a little too tightly—it broke his shoulder and his rib.

Gary took Brent and his brother, Jason, to the Super Bowl every year. Brent's favorite team was the Detroit Lions, and star running back Barry Sanders was his role model. Brent, Gary, and Jason would fly to wherever the big game was and stay for the weekend; they never missed a Super Bowl.

Football was more than just a game to watch for Brent, it was his passion, and he excelled at it. At Pikeville High School, Brent was an all-county running back for the Pikeville Panthers. He was named offensive player of the year at the start of his senior year, in 1996, and he is still the leading rusher and scorer in the school's history.

The Kentucky High School Athletic Association recognizes Brent for holding these records: 8th overall in career yards rushing, tenth overall in career touchdowns, and 11th overall in career points scored.

''Brent was idolized by the students and their parents,'' says Eddie Coleman, Brent's uncle. ''He was a local hero before he was the real hero.''

With so much talent came an appropriate nickname. Brent's teammates called him ''Rocket,'' because he could find a hole and plow right through it.

Footage from a local television station shows Brent earned yet another nickname—''Stumpy.'' ''I guess because I'm short and fat,'' a grinning Brent said to the TV reporter.

''He didn't lack for confidence,'' his father Gary tells us. ''Brent was someone with compassion, always trying to do good, always trying to do the right thing, and he had a competitive personality.''

Everyone around him could see Brent was special, and that did not change when Brent joined the Army. After attending Marshall University in Huntington, WV, for 2 years, he enlisted on July 11, 2001, and underwent basic training at the U.S. Army Armor Center at Fort Knox, KY. He graduated Basic in the top five overall.

Brent was then assigned to Company B, 1st Battalion, 68th Armor Regiment, 4th Infantry Division, based out of Fort Carson, CO. Upon graduating basic training, he told his family, ''I know I can make it on my own.''

Brent saw service to his country as a way of life. ''He was going to make a career out of it, and I encouraged him to,'' says Gary. Brent held several positions on the M1A1 Abrams tank, including gunner and loader, and he eventually became a tank commander.

Stationed in Colorado Springs, Brent met a special woman there, and Brent and Kirsten Sinley Coleman became husband and wife. They married in March, 3 weeks before Brent deployed to Iraq.

The star running back and tank commander who had already acquired a few nicknames soon picked up another from his fellow soldiers: ''Hollywood.'' I will let SSG Jason Gallegos, who served with Brent, explain why.

Brent ''was about five-foot-five and weighed about 175 pounds,'' Staff Sergeant Gallegos says. ''His body was short in stature, but he was pure muscle with about maybe eight to nine percent body fat.''

''He looked like an action figure, a poster child of what a United States soldier looks like. . . . The reason behind the nickname was because Corporal Coleman worked out hard everyday here for two to three hours a day.

''Then whenever he got the opportunity, he would go outside our bunker into the sun in just his PT shorts, place mirrors around him, put on his shades and throw on some music and tan. It was like he was a movie star.''

Brent was well liked by his fellow soldiers; and not just because of funny stories like these. He was liked and respected because he always gave his best, and encouraged others to do the same.

''He would always volunteer for the tough missions,'' Staff Sergeant Gallegos says. '''Be smart and be aggressive,' he would say, because he felt if you're passive then you not only endanger yourself, but also your soldiers. . . . He was there for anybody, no matter what platoon, what day of the week, or what time of day.''

At Brent's funeral, his sergeant told the Coleman family, ''Brent was 24 and they get a lot of 18-year-olds. Brent would always volunteer to take the young ones' places to protect them.''

''He served his country. He never complained. He was made for the military, physically and mentally,'' Brent's father, Gary, says. ''He said he had a job to do.''

Mr. President, I had the honor of meeting Gary Coleman in 2005, and I presented him with an American flag flown over this Capitol. Neither that flag nor the words we say here today can make up for what the Coleman family has lost. But they are the very least we can do to honor Brent's memory.

We are thinking today of Brent's loved ones, including his wife Kirsten Sinley Coleman; his mother Janie Adkins Johnson; his father Gary Keene Coleman; his brother Jason Byron Coleman; his grandmother Ruby Coleman Damron; and many other family members and friends.

Mr. President, today, March 10, is Brent's birthday. It is a day to celebrate Brent's life, and I thought an appropriate day for me to speak on how he lived, and what he lived for.

To the Coleman family who have lost a husband, brother, and son, I want to say this: CPL Gary Brent Coleman left this world a hero. And on behalf of a grateful Nation, the U.S. Senate honors his life of sacrifice and service.

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 for the transaction of morning business until 3 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each and with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Washington is recognized.

AIR FORCE CONTRACT AWARD

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, in the last several days, we have learned some surprising things about the Air Force's decision to award a $40 billion contract to the European company, Airbus.

The Air Force wants Airbus, which is headquartered in Toulouse, France, to supply our next generation of aerial refueling tankers. It chose Airbus over the American company, Boeing, which has been making those tankers for the last 50 years.

I have made it clear over the past several days that I think this decision is shortsighted and dangerous. But today, even more questions have been raised about the process the Air Force followed to make this decision. So I want to take the opportunity this afternoon to walk through the impact I believe the Air Force decision will have because I think we need to take a good hard look at whether we as Members of the Senate think this contract should be finalized.

First, we need to be very cautious about any decision that awards the right to build a critical part of our military air technology to a company

that is controlled by a foreign government. What happens if that government disagrees with us on foreign policy? What if it decides it wants to slow down our military capacity? Do we want another country to have that kind of control?

The Air Force, of course, did not take that into consideration. They said they didn't have to. I think this case is a perfect example of how misguided that idea is.

Airbus is owned by the European Aeronautic Defense and Space Company—EADS—which in turn is controlled by several nations. Among them are countries which have not always agreed with the United States on foreign policy. They include Russia, which has a 5-percent stake, and the United Arab Emirates, which controls 7.5 percent of EADS.

Now, EADS has already demonstrated it is willing to bend the rules if it can help the company make money. I have talked extensively on the floor of the Senate about their attempts to sell military helicopters and planes to Iran and to Venezuela. But now we are opening the doors to a key piece of our military defense to them.

America's global military strength is built on our ability to use our military might anywhere in the world at a moment's notice. Aerial tankers are the linchpin of our air power because they allow the U.S. Air Force to stretch across the globe. Until now, the technology that powered these critical planes rested in the hands of Boeing and its American workforce that has been building them for more than 50 years.

Until now, our tankers have been built by manufacturers, designers, and engineers who are bound by law from selling technology to countries that sponsor terrorism. But as a result of this contract, we are allowing EADS to take over a cornerstone of our military technology, and we are actually paying them to do it. In fact, I argue that decision was a $40 billion investment in the military research budget of EADS and Airbus.

The Air Force has said it wasn't their responsibility to take our security or our industry into account. Well, I say to my colleagues: Congress must—we must—be more forward-looking than that.

Secondly, I question why the Air Force was not required to take the economic impact into consideration when it awarded this contract. If Boeing had won this contract, it would have created 44,000 U.S. jobs. But it is far from clear what kind of an investment Airbus and its partner, Northrop Grumman, plan to make in the United States.

Our economy is hurting. We are nearing a recession, if we aren't already there. Families across the country are struggling to get by, in part because their factory jobs have been moved overseas. Workers across this country are frustrated, and they are angry that at a time such as this, their Government is saying it wants to take American tax dollars—our tax dollars—and give that money to a foreign company to build planes for our military.

We have more reason for concern because for decades Europe provided subsidies, their subsidies, to prop up Airbus and EADS. Airbus, they have said, is a jobs program that has led to tens of thousands of layoffs in the United States, and EADS has made little secret of its desire to dismantle the American aerospace industry.

Our Government, in fact, is concerned enough about these practices that we now have a WTO case against the EU over this. Yet here we are, last week our Government awarded Airbus this $40 billion contract anyway. That should give us a great deal of pause because EADS is already looking to build on the toehold that contract gives them into our aerospace industry.

In fact, a report in a leading French news service today says the executive president of EADS—Airbus—wants to build on the company's success with the tanker contract and propose to the EADS board ''two takeover projects in the fields of defense, security, or services.''

And he said: ''One of them at least should be in the United States.''

That brings me to my final point this afternoon. Why didn't the Air Force consider these obvious questions about national security and about economic security? Well, the Los Angeles Times today suggests an answer. They report on the front page of their paper today that EADS and its partner, Northrop Grumman, may have played a role in narrowing the scope of what the Air Force looked at. In fact, the Times reports that Northrop executives ensured that the Air Force wouldn't ask the competitors how Government subsidies would help pay for the design and development of the tanker—the subject of the very WTO dispute I just mentioned.

According to that article, Northrop made threats in order to shape the criteria the Air Force followed.

The Times reports:

> Northrop threatened at one point to pull out of the competition if the Air Force didn't change the way the aircraft would be evaluated.

So did the Air Force pull a bait and switch with this contract? Did it unfairly change the process to benefit EADS?

I believe there are many serious questions about this selection process. As U.S. Senators, it is our job to consider the future of our national security and our defense. I believe we need open and honest answers to those questions before this contract is finalized. In fact, I think we ought to demand the answers. Our economy and our aerospace industry are suffering, and we are at war across the globe. We have to get this right. Our future depends on it.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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

NATIONAL SECURITY ISSUES

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about three issues that I think are vitally important for our national security. First, there is this matter of terrorist surveillance and our national security.

This body passed the bipartisan FISA Act bill overwhelmingly—more than 2 to 1—several days before the Protect America Act was to expire. The Director of National Intelligence has told us how important this bill is because without it, intelligence gaps likely will reopen, putting the safety of America—those of us in the United States—and our troops on the battlefield at risk. Yet the House Speaker refuses to allow a vote on the Senate's bill, even though a majority of House Members support its passage. If you vote, that means something. If you win, you win; if you lose, you lose. But the leadership in the House apparently thinks those rules don't apply to the FISA debate.

Even though the Speaker failed to pass a 21-day extension of the existing law in her own body, the leadership has acted as though the PAA deadline was extended. There has been no action.

So what is the House going to do this week? Well, the Speaker has signaled that the House will vote on overriding the President's veto of the 2008 intelligence authorization bill, even though she knows there are not enough votes to override the vote. Why? Because apparently, the House leadership has decided it is more important to make a political statement about interrogation techniques than to give the intelligence community the tools it needs to conduct surveillance of foreign intelligence.

The IC—the intelligence community—needs these tools and authorities that are provided in the bill we passed. They are working tirelessly to protect us from real and constant terrorist threats, and they should not have to wait any longer for the House to pass that measure.

Secondly, let me talk about Korea briefly. I just came from an Appropriations Defense Subcommittee hearing with General Bell, our commanding general in Korea. He told us that not just a brave new wind but a typhoon has blown through South Korea, and the previous government that was in many ways anti-American was totally willing to accommodate North Korea in all of its efforts, which included building missiles and nuclear weapons, and rebuff the United States.

Well, the people of Korea had enough, and they overwhelmingly elected a new President, President Lee Myung-bak, who ran on a platform of revitalizing the economy, making any actions with North Korea reciprocal, and improving their alliance with the U.S. position. The candidate who came in second agreed with him on these issues. The previous leadership candidate got single digits.

The most important things we can do are to increase our trade and our military assistance to South Korea. South