

should say, that were not given to the lowest bidder who was qualified.

I had asked the GAO to determine how much money that cost the taxpayers, how much difference there was between the lowest bid and the higher bid that the airport in Denver accepted, and they were unable to come up with that. The information was simply not available as to how much money the taxpayers had lost because they had not taken the lowest qualified bid.

I give that background because my concern about the sixth runway is that that practice may be repeated on the sixth runway construction grants, and I think we would be remiss if we gave money for construction to that project which did not insist on either the lowest bid or, if they choose not to take the lowest bid—and there may be circumstances that justify that—at least they would disclose the amount of money that the bid they accepted exceeded the lowest bid.

Frankly, I believe disclosing that would be a strong incentive for officials who get Federal money to look for the best bargain for the taxpayer.

Here is what has happened. The amendment I offered—it was adopted on this floor—that required disclosure when you do not take the lowest bid of the major contracts was lost in conference. The House would not go along with it. I asked the City of Denver to give me a letter committing to disclose the amount of money of the bid that they accepted for the sixth runway exceeds the lowest bid, and they have declined to do so.

Mr. President, I cannot in good conscience ask this Congress to send money for the sixth runway in Denver without at least a disclosure by the city of how much money they leave on the table or how much money it cost the taxpayers.

So I am sad tonight. The Senator from Arizona listened to our concern. He was willing to help out Denver to try to work with us. He bent over backwards to try to be helpful, to look for avenues where this could be corrected and the sixth runway could go ahead, but I was not able to bring to the Senator from Arizona or this body a commitment from Denver that said they will disclose the facts when they get the lowest bid.

Mr. President, in light of that, unfortunately, the sixth runway is lost for this year. As I leave this body, I know it will be considered again next year. But, Mr. President, I hope future Congresses do not hand out money for someone who is not going to take the lowest bid, or at least disclose how much over that lowest bid they took.

Mr. President, I might point out that what happens in some of these cases is that the contractor who gets the bid, when he has not been the lowest bidder, then gets hit up for paying contributions from the politicians who ran for office who were involved in letting the bids. I think it is crystal clear to everyone what is involved here. You

turn down the lowest bidder, you give the contract to someone who did not deserve it, at least in terms of the bidding process, and then you go and ask that contractor for money. I think there is not any doubt in anybody's mind who understands this situation what is going on there.

I do not think we ought to let it happen. I do not think we ought to hand out money without at least insisting that it be disclosed. I appreciate the efforts of the Senator from Arizona. I appreciate the efforts of the Senator from South Dakota, to work on this.

I am sad that we have not been able to go ahead with the sixth runway. But, Mr. President, this is an issue we should not ignore.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Colorado. I want to tell him that I had no idea that it was not a matter of public record when taxpayers' dollars are being used, as to what the bids were and who made the low bid and who made the high bid and what, in fact, was the entire process of ascertaining and awarding these bids. They should be open to public scrutiny. For the life of me, I cannot understand any rationale, when it is taxpayers' dollars being used, why this procedure and process should be hidden from public view.

I want to assure the Senator from Colorado that I view it, not only as something that I would want to do, it is something that I feel obligated to do, and that is to follow up on this issue next year. I do not know all the details of this matter in regards to Denver International Airport but let me tell the Senator from Colorado, as he knows as well as I do, when processes like this are kept from public view, it lends itself to procedures and results which are not always in the public's interest. That is why we demand open disclosure of bidding in the Federal process. Frankly, it should not happen anywhere without an open and complete accounting to the taxpayers for the taxpayers' dollars uses.

If they are using private money, if someone donates the money to the airport and says use this however you want to—fine. If they do not want to describe how it is being used or who gets the bid, that is fine also.

But, as long as it is taxpayers dollars—and correct me if I am wrong, some \$4 billion has gone into the construction of Denver International Airport, I would ask the Senator from Colorado? Then I think, obviously, the best value for the dollar should be gained, not only for the people of Colorado, but for taxpayers all over America.

So, I again thank my dear, dear friend from Colorado. Frankly, I view him as our conscience. I am not sure what we are going to do without him. Everyone is replaceable around here, but he is one that I think is far harder

to replace than most. I appreciate, again, his commitment on this effort.

Mr. President, before going through closing down the Senate, I want to again thank my friend from South Dakota, Senator PRESSLER, the chairman of the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, which I will do again at the end of this process on Thursday. And I hope it is earlier.

Senator PRESSLER has been committed to this process. He has been actively involved. His leadership in the conference, his leadership as we went through this two year-long process, was absolutely critical and vital. I am grateful for his leadership and his example of conscientiousness, that he sets for all of us.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### DEMOCRATIC TRENDS IN ASIA

Mr. PELL. Mr. President, as the 20th century draws to a close, we all find ourselves musing and marveling over the changes history has brought the world in this millennium. Human ingenuity has brought astounding advances in technology and in medicine. Society has also faced revolutionary changes and our forbearers who welcomed the year 1900 would little recognize the lives their descendants lead today. In politics, the 20th century brought new ways of thinking about the social contract between citizens and their government. Some, like fascism and communism, were dangerous and ultimately discredited failures. But democracy, the great experiment our Founding Fathers created on the shores of the New World, has not just endured but spread around the world. It has been my great delight to watch democracy begin to spread in Asia.

Some would argue that it is not natural that democracy would grow in Asia. Some Asian leaders and intellectuals have actively resisted the idea that democracy be a political option for the region. They have argued that Asian values—loosely Confucian, authoritarian, and family- or group-focused—rather than individually-focused—are inconsistent with democracy. These leaders further argue that the stunning economic success of the East Asian "Tigers" is specifically due to their more closed political systems and to their emphasis on social stability at the expense of individual voice and choice. Moreover, these same leaders will point to legitimate problems in many Western societies—such as drug abuse, homelessness, violent crimes, to name a few—are the direct result of an overly permissive society that emphasizes individual freedom over social stability. But I believe that these cultural arguments distort reality and are